

A N
Infallible W A Y
T O
CONTENTMENT,
In the mid't of
Publick or Personal
CALAMITIES.
With particular
Encouragements
A G A I N S T
The Fear of *Fire and Poverty*, Evil
Tidings, and *Death* it self.

—*But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto my self, so that I might finish my course with Joy, Acts 20. 24.*

The Fourth Edition Revised, Corrected, much Enlarged; and thereto added a Second Part, Entituled the *Peace and Joy of the Soul Procured and Preserved.*

LONDON: Printed for *W. Freeman*, at the Bible over against the Middle-Temple-Gate in *Flax-Street*, MDCC.

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T H E

Epistle Dedicatory.

My dear *Adelphius*,

W*Ere Books Dedicable only to those that need them, twere difficult to find one, to whom the following Subject (duely managed) would be an impertinent Present. That I make this to you, is out of a compassionate sense of those melancholy, desponding Thoughts that have sometimes perplexed you, as well as my self : For which we may, 'tis true, thank, or rather blame, and condemn our selves, that we have rendered our Lives so uncomfortable, by our unprofitable Solitude : That we have been so unreconciled to our Condition, which hath hindered the sweet and quiet of it, and disturbed that calmness and serenity of Soul we might have otherwise enjoy'd : That we have no more cheerfully comply'd with the Will of our gracious DISPOSER, and thankfully embraced the Portion He hath allotted us ; whose Omnipotent Wisdom man-*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

ges all for the good of his Servants. Our
own impatience is our greatest Misery. He
that is ever content with what he is, makes
himself happy without a Fortune, and when
others judge him most unfortunate. Nothing
more general, than Complaints: And in-
deed, in a careless Age, no wonder 'tis so hard
to find contented Minds. While we neglect
our Duty, we cannot but be troublesome to
our selves; while we secure that, we cannot
be much distressed in any Calamity. This, were
there nothing else, is abundantly sufficient to
recommend, and endear our Happy Religion
to us; that the sincere observance of it, not
only prevents many Troubles, but affords
support under All. Our merciful Sovereign's
Honour, and our own Happiness, he hath joyn-
ed together, so, as no man can put asunder; nor
be miserable in any Condition, without being
Disobedient, the fatal Cause of being so in
all. There's certainly a more easie undisturbed
Passage through this World of Trouble, than
most find: Because they'll not be at the cost and
pains of a good Conscience; which entitles
us to the special care of an All-sufficient only
Wise GOD; and affords that inward Con-
tentment, which all wise Men have valued a-
bove external Accommodations. And without
all

The Epistle Dedicatory.

all peradventure, they prepossess here no considerable share of that future Rest, where only are unallay'd Delights, whomake it their business to be like the undefiled Inhabitants of it. We can justly complain of nothing that separates us not from the Love of GOD, who is perpetually concern'd for humane Affairs, and particularly intends their Happiness, who place it only in Him. In a turbulent World, in unsetled Times, amidst the straights and difficulties we are liable to pass through; nothing can be more desirable than to be above Misfortunes; to be free from Molestation and anxious Thoughts; to meet all Vicissitudes and Events with constant equal Tempers; to undergo all Crosses with becoming contented Minds; to entertain the harshest Accidents with equanimity and acquiescence of Souls, wholly submitted unto fully satisfi'd with the Divine Disposal: To which, if the following prove not an Infallible Way, 'tis because the ensuing Considerations are not well Digested, and rightly Apply'd. If they contribute any thing to your Contentment, it will be no small addition to mine; for I am,

YOUR very Affectionate, &c.

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THE INTRODUCTION.

HOW great an Impostor is this World unto us? In the diversity of Reports and Opinions, in the eager pursuit of worldly Greatness, in the hungry thirst after carnal Pleasures, in the heats of Passion, in the crys of the Poor, in the oppression of the Rich, in the throng of Business, in the remission of Idleness, in the diversion of Friends, in the spite of Enemies, in the hopes and fears, joys and sorrows of this evil World; how few find Rest and Content? how many lose GOD and themselves? When I consider the usefulness and excellency of Divine CONTENTMENT; how necessary and profitable, pleasant and comfortable, beautiful and amiable; how it makes us Rich and Happy in despite of the World; fits us to do, and receive Good, and suffer Evil; how it frees us from Sin and innumerable Temptations to it; how creditable to Religion; how pleasing, how like, how near it is unto GOD: As also, the great trouble and burden, vanity and unreasonableness, hurt and unprofitableness, pride and unthankfulness, rebellion and unbelief, the sinfulness, mischief, and sad effects of Murmuring, Impatience, and Discontent; how much be-

ii The INTRODUCTION.

low the Spirit, Profession and Duty, Relation, Dignity and Expectation of Christians; what GOD hath bad, and expects from them; how dishonourable, displeasing and provoking it is to Him; how it impoverishes and beggers us; renders us incapable of enjoying any Mercy; excludes us from all true Joy, Comfort, Rest, or Safety; exposes us to all imaginable Mischiefs and Miseries: I am ashamed of my Folly; I am confounded at, I crave pardon for my Guilt: I am concern'd; I resolve to be otherwise. Such like Considerations occasioned the Collection of those ensuing: And were they Familiariz'd, made part of our selves; entertain'd with a firm unshaken belief of their truth and use, we should not be at a loss, where to run for relief in our distress; but be able (by altering and tempering the dispositions and inclinations of our Minds, Wills, and Affections) to be Happy in those Circumstances, which render others Miserable; to frustrate and elude the effects of the most common Causes of Grief and Misery; making them the Causes of Pleasure and Delight: Those Occurrences and Accidents, Occasions of the greatest Joy, which imbitter the Pleasures of other Men.

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Infallible WAY

T O

CONTENTMENT, &c.

THIS World is a *State of Probation*; we live in it on no other Terms, than to be liable to all the Hazards, and Adventures, Troubles, Changes, and Vicissitudes, that attend *Mortality*. *Vanity* and *Vexation*, are the Essence of all earthly Things; incorporated into the Mals of this visible Creation. *In the World you shall have Tribulation* (a). The ordinary Lot and Portion of all those, the Captain of whose Salvation was made perfect through sufferings (b). To be offended at them, is to be offended that we are *Men*, or *Christians*. It becomes us not to pore upon our present Evils, but attentively to look about

(a) Joh. 16. 33. (b) Heb. 2. 10.

us, and consider, what others have cheerfully endur'd, and to upbraid our selves with such like Questions, *What then, are We better than They? Art thou greater than Abraham and the Prophets? Whom makest thou thy self? If ye be without Chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye Bastards and not Sons* (c). It's the Character and Brand of the Wicked, that, *They are not in Trouble as other Men* (d). Every true Israelite, expects their Father Jacob's Legacy: *The Archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him* (e). And to find their days as his, *few, and evil* (f). Heaven's highest Favourites have no *Writ of Privilege*, but the unspeakable advantage of making *them easie*, and *useful*, by considerate, submissive, contented Minds. *Patience lessens pain and suffering: Trouble aggravates every sad Accident: Contentment makes it none at all.* If we *will* it cannot harm us; if we give way to it, we wound our selves, and joyn with it to make us miserable, and a single mischief, a great many: But, if we quietly sit still,

(c) Heb. 12. 8. (d) Psal. 73. 5. (e) Gen. 49. 23. (f) Gen. 47. 9.

and



and *in patience possess our Souls*, we are what we were before the Evil came, only our Souls have the Addition of the greatest Joy and Pleasure, by the Victory we have obtain'd over it, and our selves. The *greatest of our misfortunes* is our *impatience*. *Discontent* is worse than any Evil we feel: *Contentment* is better than any Comfort we want or desire. How pleasant is it to a Christian, to find himself willing to be without that which he most desired, and to suffer that, to which he was most averse? Far sweeter than the obtaining and enjoying of that he longed for. 'Tis better to be *Content* through *Grace*, than through the enjoying any outward Comfort; *that* can content me but in one particular, but *this Grace* in All; *This* makes my Soul better; the thing I would have, cannot. In having my desire satisfied, I am content through self-love; but by this *Grace* I come to be content out of Submission and Love to *God*, a Shelter and Sanctuary within us against all Injuries abroad; who fills the faithful Soul with his Peace and Presence: In him we find Refuge in our Dangers, Confidence in our Fears, Comfort in our Sorrows,
Cour-

Counsel in our Perplexities, Light in our Darknes, and Life in Death. Could we but as well rejoyce in our *present Happiness*, as he hath made provision for *it*, we should no more miss of *it*, than of that which is without end.

Encouragement from the Faithfulness and Omnipresence of G O D.

HE doth not set us to plow the Rock, to feed in a dry and barren Wilderness. He hath provided both for our *Safety* and *Well-being*; the *Covenant*, as well as the *Land of Promise*, flows with Milk and Honey: *Let your Conversation be without Covetousness, and be content with such things as you have; for, he hath said, (g) I will never (in no case, at no time, upon no occasion, for no cause, in no condition, respect, or relation, by no means) leave thee, nor forsake thee (h).* He may change his *dispensations*, but not his *affections, relations, engagements; chastise, but not disown, not disinherit; cast down, but not cast off; withdraw for a time, but not depart for good and all: I will not*

(g) Deut. 31.8. Jos. 1.5. (h) Heb. 13.5.

turn

turn away from them to do them good (i). My loving kindness will I not utterly take from them, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail (k). He loves us too dear, indeed; hath paid too dear for us, to leave us in our Defilements, without Grace; in our Disquietments and Dejections, without Comfort; in our Dangers and Difficulties, without Protection; in our Graves, without Preservation and Deliverance. He will not leave us in Life; not leave us at Death; not leave us after Death; not leave us when our Breath hath left us: He will be a faster Friend than our very Souls are to us (l). He is with us and ours, when Friends (or we) are absent; Enemies, Evils round about us; who is most nearly related to us, who most dearly loves us, who will never be wanting to us in any thing that's good for us. In his Company there can be no Danger: If God be for us, who (what) can be against us (m)? None but such as must be against himself, nothing but weakness, nothing to hurt us; there's no room for doubting, whether it shall go well with us.

(i) Jer. 32. 40. (k) Psal. 89. 33. (l) Gen. 46. 3, 4. and 50. 13. (m) Rom. 8. 31.

Estrangement from God, and distrust of his Providence, are the causes of all disquietness in our selves. When we run away from him, we fly from our *Shield*, our *Shadow*, our *Rock*, our *Refuge*, and lose our Confidence of his Protection. *Put on* (saith the Apostle) *the armor of light* (n). Strange Armour, that a man may see *through't*! A good mans Armour, is, that he needs none; his Armour is an *open breast*; that he can expose himself fearless of any Injury; *Who is he that will harm you, if you be followers of that which is good* (o)? He's secure from any external violence, so far as it shall be never able to invade his *Spirit*, which is rais'd above this stormy Region, where Clouds and Tempests have no place: *The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever* (p). True peace is the necessary *Consequence* of *Holiness*, but dwells not, where Sin is not pardoned and subdued, an uninterrupted course of Piety maintained: *The Lord will speak peace unto his People, and to his Saints* (q); but *no peace unto the wicked* (r). He who

(n) Rom. 13.12. (o) 2 Pet. 3.13. (p) Isa. 32.17. (q) Ps. 85.8. (r) If. 48.22.

lives *carelessly* cannot be *peaceable*. There's no *protection* against *fear*, but *innocency*. A *good man* is *satisfied* from himself (s); Neither shall they say, *Loe here, or Loe there*, (is Happiness) for the kingdom of God is *within you* (t). Labour after *Truth*, and *Peace* will follow. By not doing our own works, we keep the true *Rest* and *Sabbath of the Soul*. To him that overcomes (himself) is given the *hidden Manna* (u). He can have no *peace* that lodges his deadly *Enemy* in his Bosom. He only can have the holy Spirit for his *Comforter*, that hath him for his *Guide*. When Religion is become our *Temper* and *Constitution*, and the *Divine Will*, our *Joy* and *Pleasure*, our full *Content*, our just *Satisfaction*; in taking Christ's *Yoak* upon us, by a pliable *submissive frame* and *temper of spirit*, a free sincere intire obedience to his *Laws*, learning of him to be meek and lowly of heart, we shall find *rest unto our Souls* (w). O the never-ceasing musick, comfort, and satisfaction of a good Conscience! It's our *Suffering*, *Sick-beds*, *Death-bed Cordial*; a softer *Pillow*

(s) Pro. 14. 14. (t) Luke 17. 21. (u) Rev. 2. 17. (w) Mat. 11. 29.

under our *Head* (though that be upon a Stone, and we have no Covering but the Canopy of Heaven over us) than others can lay *theirs* upon, in the richest Pavilions, or most splendid Palaces : It causes the *Patient* to *smile*, while the *Spectators* weep ; the *Martyr* to *bleed* with more ease, than the *Executioner* sweats : Is a *continual Feast*, when we have nothing else : enables us to eat Herbs, and drink Water, and give God thanks.

Guilt is always terrifying and affrighting : Makes great ones tremble in the midst of their Palaces ; afraid of Death under the Covert of their gilded Ceilings : The cleft of a Wall puts them into a fright ; the clattering of a Shutter drives their Courage to a nonplus ; they fear their days to be at an end every time the Wind breaks a Pane of their Window, or puffs up a Tile from their Roof : Places of Safety are not secure to them ; and they are as much amaz'd to see the Tapestry slip from the Wall, as if an Earthquake had violently thrown up the Foundation of their Dwellings. An evil Spirit (their guilty Consciences) haunt them continually, which all their Diversions cannot
con-

conjure down, or drive away ; so that, though neither God nor Man punish them in this World, they can never pardon nor enjoy themselves. Guilt makes them think they still hear the noise and alarm of Wrath and Vengeance :

*At every flash of Lightning they wax pale ;
When distant Thunder rumbles, Villains
(quail.*

Guilt and Unbelief creates all our Fears ; makes us weary of the days, and watch in the night ; our Sleep short, the Nights long ; our Dreams troublesom, our Watchings painful ; a pale Face, a thoughtful desponding perplexed Heart ; shuts up Heaven it self against us ; makes the God of Truth a Lye: *Faith* opens Heaven, glorifies God, fortifies, confirms the Heart, and establishes us ; fills us with Courage and Acquiescence in him ; holds our Hearts in a holy Tranquility, amidst all the unequal motions of this Life ; will make us stand upright even among the Ruines of the great fall of the old Building of Nature, when Heaven and Earth shall tremble and shrink, hasting to a Dissolution.

tion. He is sure to be *Fed*, who is able to *Believe*: Find out the *Word*, and God will find out the *Deed*: Tell him what he hath *said*, and he will *make it good*. He never yet was worse than his Word, or Compounded for less than Due, with any whom his Promise made his Creditor. *Joshua* challenges all *Israel*, to shew but *one Thing* God had failed them in, of all the good things he had spoke concerning them, (x). *Faith is the substance of things not seen*; doubts not of Food, though we see no Corn; despairs not of Cloaths, though we have no Flax; wants not a Sacrifice, though we have no Herd (y). *Faith* loves no Disputes; hates all doubtful Reasonings, banishes all carnal Objections; sets not *Providences* against *Promises*; triumphs over all seeming Contradictions; looks upon the greatest Impediments, as difficulties which cannot check, but only magnifie Almightyness. There is no question left, where God's Promise is engaged; there are no Objections against Faith, nothing impossible *to him that can believe*; no Desert without Provision; no Dungeon without Light; no fiery Trial

(x) Jos 23. 14. (y) Hab. 3. 17, 18.

without

without Comfort ; no Valley of Tears without a door of Hope. Let's never fear to urge the Promises ; *a good Man*, will be as good as his word, much more *a good God* : He that was *so free*, as to make them, will be *so faithful*, as to make them good.

Why then do we stumble at every Straw ? Why are we of doubtful Minds ? And why do Thoughts arise in our Hearts ? We will then be distrustful, when we have a want, he cannot supply ; a danger, he cannot prevent, or remove ; a Disease, he cannot heal, or mitigate ; an Enemy, he cannot overcome, or reconcile ; a Red Sea, he cannot dry up, or divide ; a Wall, he cannot throw down, or help us over ; who sways the Scepter of the Universe, and lets loose, or binds up the Creatures Influences at his Pleasure : Keeps the Lyons from eating one Prophet (z) ; and the Fish from digesting another (a) ; the Fire from touching three Captives in a burning Furnace (b) ; supplies the *Israelites* forty years, where they neither sow, nor reap, toil, beg, nor steal (c) ;

(z) Dan. 6. 22. (a) Jon. 1. 17. and 2. 10. (b) Dan. 3. 27. (c) Deut. 3. 4.

alters the Course of Nature, and the Hearts of Men; removes all Impediments for their succour, defence, and advantage; cloaths the naked Trees: recovers the verdure of the forlorn Earth; exalts the setting Sun in its Beauty and Brightness; spreads every day a Table where all may reach convenient Food; in the time of Famine plants a Corn-field in the bottom of a Barrel of Meal, for *Elijah**; and an Olive-yard in a Cruse, for the Widow of *Sareptah*; fills empty *Naomi* with a famous Off-spring (*d*); gives *Amaziah* much more than he had parted with to the Army of *Israel* (*e*); and *Job* double for what he took from him (*f*); restores to his *Penitents* what the Locusts and Caterpillers had eaten (*g*); accomplishes his Promise of Incredible Plenty in *Samaria*, and rains it not from Heaven neither (*h*); recompences to his People the Comforts of Health and Liberty, which Sickneſs had impaired; of Relations and Friends, which the Grave had devoured; of Hou-

Neh. 9. 21. * 1 Kin. 17. 16. (*d*) Ru. 4. 17. (*e*) 2 Chr. 25. 9. (*f*) Job 42. 10. (*g*) Joel 2. 25. (*h*) 2 Kin. 7. 1, &c.

ses and Estates which the Fire had consumed: Builds his *Temple* against all Plots and Scandals, Weapons and Oppositions; discomfits the *Philistims* by *Jonathan* and his Armour-bearer (*i*); delivers *Asa* with a handful, in comparison of a thousand thousand (*k*); *Hezekiah* from *Senacherib* (*l*); *Jehosaphat* from the Children of *Ammon*, *Moab*, and *Mount seer* (*m*). There's none saved by the multitude of an Host: Subdues a mighty Prince by an Army mustered of his meanest Creatures*: Routs an innumerable Host with a few Trumpets, Lamps, and Pitchers; likelier to fright Children, than armed Men (*n*): Discountenances any design, if his eye be but against it; if he but hiss, his Enemies come with speed, and revenge his Quarrel against themselves (*o*): Let him *but arise*, and his enemies are scattered (*p*). With the turning of his hand he turns them into Hell. Not a Creature in Heaven, Earth, or Hell, but have an ear to hear him; and stand ready prest, at his Command, to perform his pleasure

(*i*) 1 Sam. 14. (*k*) 2 Ch. 14. 8, &c. (*l*) 2 Kin. 19. 35.
 (*m*) 2 Ch. 20. * Act. 12. 23. (*n*) Jude 7. 20, &c. (*o*) Isa.
 5 26. (*p*) Psal. 68. 1.

(when

(when he liſts up his Enſign) againſt his Enemies, for his Friends. What can ſtand before a creating Power? Who can reſiſt or oppoſe infinite Strength, and Almightyneſs? He can do what he will; and will do for his what is beſt, according to the Dictates of infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs.

Henceforth then I will employ that time I uſed to ſpend in diſquieting thoughts about the things that diſturbed me, in acts of Love, and Praise, Submission, and Reſignation, Faith, and Confidence in God. I cannot want or abound, but from thee, who givest before thou takeſt, and takeſt but what thou gavest. Give me *what thou wilt*, ſo thou give me *Contentment* with it. Frame my *Heart* to my *Eſtate*, ſo ſhall I have an *Eſtate* to my *Heart*; and not *want* when I have *leaſt*, becauſe as free from deſire as ſuperfluity. *Religion* teaches a Man to be without that, which others know not how to want; and, an Ability to be content with a little, is to be more truly rich, than the having much without being ſatiſfied. I ſhould be much aſham'd any ſhould be found more Content, among all thoſe
that

that have less. Had I *store*, I would not *impoverish* my self by *Covetousness*; now *poor*, I will not make a *little*, less by *mur-muring*, but *inrich* my self by *Content*: So I shall have enough, with less trouble and danger, duty and reckoning: I shall never pay for what I have; I hold all *in Christ our Head* *. I have all with the love and favour of a reconciled God, with a Blessing, with the Pardon of my Sins, with a thankful Heart, and as a Pledge of eternal Mercies. While others *grumble* in looking on great mens *Estates*, I'll *tremble* to think on their *Accounts*; and study more how to give a *good one* of my little than how to make it more. Plentiful Provisions *in*hances the Reckoning. God's Bounty sets down all his Gifts; the worst Servant *confessed*, though he *employ'd not* his Talent. Have I not more than I can give a good Account of my spending well: Are not my Receipts great enough already? Must I complain that I have not more to Answer for? Rich Men, like Sumpter-Horses, travel all day under the Burden of some rich Treasure, at night lie down in a foul Stable with galled

* 1 Cor. 3. 31, &c.

Backs, in the Grave with distressed Consciences. Many at the Great Day will rejoyce they had no more, while others shall wish they had not had so much.

*Encouragement from the Righteousness of
G O D.*

CONsider his absolute and unerring Righteousness, whereby he is infinitely just in himself, and by the highest, most perfect Rule of Equity (his Will) governs all his Creatures: He doth them no wrong; he can do no wrong. Then, *Wherefore doth a living Man complain, a Man, for the punishment of his Sin (q)?*

We are [Men] a Mercy so outweighing any Temporal suffering, as may well transport us with joy and admiration under them: *What is Man, that thou shouldest magnifie him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him? and that thou shouldest visit him every moment (r)?* The Nobility of our Nature shou'd advance us, shame us, into a more chearful exalted frame and temper: We ought rather

(q) La. 3. 39. (r) Job 7. 17, 18. Psal. 8. 4.

humbly to thank, than fretfully murmur against him; being so far from deserving any favour, that we are not worthy a blow: It's too much honour to us for him to contend with us; an ignoble Contest! *What is a Man that thou visitest him?* Tutors, take such particular notice, such special care of him, as to reclaim, or stop him in his wandring; and correct, as well as feed him; a sign he hath not forgot him. The Rod of Discipline in his hand, becomes a Scepter of Honour in ours.

We are [*But Men*] in a state of Dependence, Subordination, Subjection, and Suffering: And, *Who art thou, O Man, that repliest against God?* Infinitely above us, unaccountable to us, supreme Lord over us! It belongs not to us in our militant state, to chuse our Station, but to behave our selves well in it. Every one must not, cannot be a Commander; and common Soldiers are not to Counsel or Dispute, but to Observe, and Obey their General; whether it be to fight in the Field, to dig in the Trench, or to stand upon the Watch. 'Tis as reasonable to refuse submission to him in what he Com-

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mands,

mands, as in what he *Inflicts*. The World is but a Stage we act on; it's very little material what part ours is, so we act it well: A *Comedian* may get as much Applause by acting the *Slave*, as the *Conqueror*. Every Condition hath an uneasiness; so that when we court a change, we rather seek to *vary*, than *end* our Miseries. We must expect Briars and Thorns, who have changed our Condition, voluntarily translated our selves into another Soil; and have no reason to be grieved at the native Incumbrances, and Inconveniences of it; or to expect exemption from them: To meet with nothing but the Pleasures of a Garden, who have turned our selves out of it into a WilderNESS. Men repine at what is extraordinary, and unusual, not general and common to all. In vain we murmur at what is natural, or at what we cannot remedy; and afflict our selves with a fatal necessity, which involves *Monarchs* and *Peasants*. The *Philosopher* handsomely reproach'd the Impatience of the *Persian King* for the Death of his Wife, by undertaking to revive her, if he could but help him to the Names of *Three Men* that had *never grieved*, to write up-
on

on *her Tomb*. *Solon* seeing a Friend of his much oppressed with Grief, carry'd him up to a Tower that over-look'd the City of *Athens*, and shewing him all the Buildings, said to him, Consider how many Sorrows have, do, and shall in future Ages inhabit under all these Roofs, and do not vex thy self with the Inconveniences which *are common to Mortality*, as if they were only yours. If there were (saith *Socrates*) a *common Bank* made of all mens Troubles, most men would rather chuse to take *those they brought*, than to venture upon a *new Dividend*. We must reverse God's *Fundamental Law*, before we can hope for a *total exemption from Suffering*. All that any man can aspire to, is to have but an *equal share*: And the generality of men have *so*; at least, none can prove that he hath not so. He's an ill Member of a Community, who would shuffle off *all Payments in Publick Assessments*: who, in this *Common Tax* God hath laid upon our Nature, is not content to bear *his share*. We must build a World apart, and not be content with the Elements that serv'd our Ancestors turn; or bear the Miseries of Hu-

mane Nature (since we participate of it) and be one of those several Companies of Mourners that make up Mankind, whose showers of Tears almost every where water (not to say overflow) this Vale of Tears. When I have least, and suffer most, I will try how I am able to live with less, and suffer more; and evidence by my Chearfulness, *in that* some call Want and Misery, that *Happiness* consists not in Superfluity, or Ease; praising God for deeming me worthy to serve as a Tryal of humane Nature; to see to how high a pitch Patience can mount. Good men little consider *their Spectators*, that strongly encounter all Adversities. If the Searcher of Hearts found us not fit, he would never honour us with so hard Employment.

We are [*living Men*] so may see better days, or improve these to our great advantage, who might be past all possibility of retrieving our Errors, or escaping eternal Miseries; on this side, which, the greatest Evils are *below*, the least Favours *above* our *Deserts*. If our *Griefs* be *short*, they deserve no great complaint; if *long*, their continuance fashions us to Patience.

Life

Life is dearer than any other temporal Mercy; the wages of sin is death: *But thy life will I give unto thee for a prey: Was in God's account (s) enough to silence all Baruch's Complaints, amidst all the Miseries of a sad Captivity. And in most deplorable times, the Church is commanded (t) not only to bless God, but to praise him aloud, for that signal Mercy, that God keeps Life and Soul together, and keeps them upon their feet; notwithstanding all the Rage and Violence of their Enemies: O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard; which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.*

We are [Sinners,] so all the Plagues we are capable of in this, and the other World, are but *our due*: If he abate any thing of this, he *punishes us less than our Iniquities deserve*: And we have more reason to *praise him* for his Mercy, than to *complain* of, and *repine* at *just and equal Dealings*. A [man] for the punishment of his sin! if he be but a man, has but rational Principles, he must needs acknowledge the equity of *suffering for Sin*;

(s) Jer. 45. 5. - (t) Ps. 66. 8. &c.

and of being *patient under it* ; whereby he endeavours to heal and reclaim us, if he be patient towards us in our sinning against him, whereby we oppose and provoke him. The haughty *Monarch*, when return'd to his Wits, harp'd upon the right string : *Those that walk in pride, he is able to abase (u)*. The *Heathen Prince* looked upon his hands and feet, laid his finger on the right fore, when he said, *As I have done, so God hath requited me (w)*. The *Thief* had so much honesty and ingenuity, as to confess acquiescence under their deserved punishment, reasonable : *We indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds (x)*. *Joseph's Brethren* hit the nail on the head, in saying one to another, *We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that, when we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear ; now is this distress come upon us (y)*. May we not all say, Am not I verily guilty concerning my Estate, my Health, my Reputation, &c? And will not *Conscience* answer, spake I not unto thee, saying, Do not sin against it, and thou

(u) Dan. 4. 37. (w) Jud. 1. 7. (x) Luke 23. 41. (y) Gen. 42. 21.

would't not hear ; therefore behold that also is required ?

Whatsoever be the *Instruments*, the *Lord* is *righteous* : The stroke is straight, though the stick be crooked. The Equity of his Dealings is always visible, though the Reason is not : His *Righteousness* is like the great Mountains, when his *Judgments* are a great Deep (z). Though *Sin* be not always the *particular Reason* why he afflicts us, yet there's sufficient reason for it on account of Sin. He never strikes, but he strikes a *Sinner*, that deserves greater than he suffers. Without him I am nothing, I have nothing, I can do nothing, I deserve nothing, I am worse than nothing, there would be no loss of me if I were brought to nothing. I cannot date my Afflictions, from the first day of my pollution ; or of my enjoyment of his Blessings. There are, that have never a good day in all their lives ; not a day of health, gladness, respect, among all their days of sickness, sadness, and reproach. My *Sufferings* are not so many as my *Sins*, as my *Mercies*, as God may exercise me

(z) Ps. 36. 6.

with, as have befallen others, as my Saviour's, as the Joys of Heaven.

We have receiv'd, we expect *great Things* at Gods hand, but what hath he from ours? Would every Man as duly ponder how much he is short of his Duty, as what he wants of his Desires, he would think it a very gentle composition to have the one unsupplied, so he might have the other remitted, and see abundant cause to sit down contentedly, and say with honest *Mephibosheth*, (a) *What right therefore have I yet to cry any more unto the King?* Doth he remove a Comfort we have not forfeited? Or, lay on an Affliction we have not deserved? Whose Obedience hath been in any degree proportionable to his Obligations? I may challenge the best Man, to cast up the account of his best day, and tell me, Whether his Receipts have not infinitely exceeded his Disbursements? Whether, for any one good thing he hath done, he hath not *received many*? Did we diligently imploy our selves in reflecting upon God's Mercies, and our own Guilt, we should find little leisure, and less reason to condole

(a) 2 Sam. 19. 28.

our Afflictions, but should divert our complaints upon our selves; and seeing (them both so numerous) be astonished at God's goodness, in continuing his Blessings in despite of all our provocations; and at our own baseness, in continuing our provocations in despite of those blessings.

That every wicked Imagination, every black Design, is not at once defeated and punished with Infatuation and Frenzy; that every blasphemous atheistical Speech, doth not wither the Tongue; every prohibited Act, fix us as perpetual Monuments of divine Vengeance; that every wilful Neglect, puts us not beyond all possibility of enjoying another opportunity for attaining eternal Happiness, (how much soever our punishments are short of our guilt) we owe to the lenity and compassion of Almighty God. Instead of complaining of so many Evils, I may well be thankful I lie under no more, who have deserv'd so much; and account every thing a favour on this side Hell. Blessed be God that he hath dealt so kindly by me as to leave me any thing, and not taken away all, when all was at his Service. He sets down Fifty

for a Hundred : His severest Dispensations are merciful Abatements of Sin's just Demerit. When my Case is most sad, it might be much worse : He breaks the Staff of my outward Comforts, he might take away my inward Cordials : He afflicts my Body, he might wound my Conscience : This *Cross* might have been a *Curse* : He ruins my Estate, he might remove himself ; lops off the Branches, he might cast Root and Branch, Body and Soul into Hell. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed ; perplexed, but not in despair ; persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down, but not destroy'd ; pained, but not damned ; holden in the cords of affliction, but not under chains of darkness : Were it *Death*, he is not yet come to the end of his Rod. The worst we can feel here, is not the thousandth part of what we have deserv'd hereafter. He visits our Transgressions with Rods, and our Iniquities with Stripes ; when he might chastise us with Scorpions, and take his Loving-kindness utterly from us. What's a Paroxysm of the Gout or Stone, to rouling on the scalding Billows of his eternal Vengeance ? A Fever, a Sick-bed,

to

to a Bed of Flames, where the Fit never goes off, the Worm never dies, the Fire is not quenched? If he will not *always chide*, *neither* keep his Anger *for ever*, he deals not with us after our Sins, nor rewards us according to our Iniquities. Let it for ever check all querelous passionate Reasonings against him, who inflicts but *temporal punishments*, that might make us *eternally miserable*: Corrects us with the Rod of Affliction, who might as justly break us with a Rod of Iron, and dash us in pieces like a Potter's Vessel.

*Encouragement from the Sovereignty of
G O D.*

CONsider his Independent, Absolute, Unlimited *Sovereignty*. Discontent under Suffering, is a striving and contending with God; opposing and controulings, Dealings as unequal, and unadvised; charging him with Tyranny; as if he went out of the way of Justice, when he treads over our Line, and transgresses the Bounds we have set him. It argues we would (if we could) *Revenge our selves*

upon

upon him, because we give way to that passion that prompts to *Revenge*. But, may we, that made not, govern and dispose of our selves? Or chuse our *Station*, more than we did *what Creatures* we would be? Is it not fit we should be at *his finding and ordering*, whose *Workmanship* we are? And as intirely render up our selves unto *his Will*, as we proceeded *from it*? Shall we not allow him the common Priviledge of all Proprietors? Is not his Interest and Dominion infinitely more Absolute, than ours, over our selves and ours? *May he not do what he will with his own*? Ungrateful Wretches are we! to be more sensible of the *loss*, than *enjoyment* of what he freely lent us for so long a time as he thought fit! to complain of that as *our Injury*, which is but *Restitution*, of what he made us not so much as a *Lease* for any set Term, without a Clause of *Revocation at pleasure*. The greatest *Monarchs* hold their Crowns and Kingdoms of him, and may be turn'd out at pleasure, at less than an hours warning. Do we look upon the Owner and Keeper, as if he came to Rob us, when he calls it in? and not rather dismiss it with thankfulness for lending it
us

us so long? *Whose Will* should take place? *Whose Pleasure* should be procured? Henceforth (my Soul) deny thy self, or deny thy self to be a Creature. Be wholly at his Dispose, or call him not thy Sovereign. He will do what he ought: He can do thee no wrong. If he send, say not, What do ye? Loosing my Life, or Livelihood; 'tis even as the Lord hath Commanded, and straightway let it go. Let there be no strife between thee and him, between thy Will and his, for he is thy Sovereign. Is not the whole Land (O self) before thee? Hast not thou enough, too much room already in others Breasts? Separate thy self, I pray thee from me, and I shall behold all the Plains of my lowest Estate, even as the Garden of God.

We can never have any settled peace, till we commit our selves quietly to him. Safety is furthest off from those, who so little esteem his Will, that they prefer their own before it. Let him see, that we can as composedly rest our selves upon him, as if it were in our own hands to do what we list: Which is the only way to please him; and we can never be pleased,
unless

unless we think that he is so too. 'Tis the Usurpation of our Will over our Reason, which breeds all our inward Tumults and Disorders: There's no possibility of curbing its Insolence, but by committing it to him, who can alone order the unruly Wills of Men. He that in spite of all the Reluctancies of Sense intirely submits his Will to God's, God will send either some outward Allays, or such inward Comfort and Support, as shall counterpoise the Affliction he takes not off. And nothing but experience can fully inform us of the unspeakable calmness, serenity, and happiness of that Soul, who hath resign'd his Will to God: All his care and chusing for himself, is now happily superseded: He's tempted to no anxious forecast of future Events; as knowing, that nothing can happen in contradiction of that Supreme Will, to which he is wholly resign'd; which will certainly chuse for him with the care and tenderness of an indulging Father, for his Child that casts it self into his Arms. His *Honour*, as well as his *Compassion*, is concern'd in the Relief of his Homagers, and Dependents, who have surrendered them-

themselves to him. Our Wills, that before were liable to perpetual Defeats, in this blessed Combination, can never be crossed, controlled, or resisted. By this means, those things that are repugnant to our sensitive Natures, are yet very agreeable to our Spirits, when we consider, that they are implicitly our own choice, since they are his, whom we have deputed to chuse for us. And, having surrendred our *Wills* to *his*, we shall without much pain, let him take any thing else: Let's but make sure of Resignation, and Content will flow in, without any further Industry. With our *Wills*, we shall certainly devest our selves of all Solicitudes, Cares, and fruitless Anxieties, which perpetually harras'd us. Cast our Burden upon him, who invites us to it: And he who bears all our Sins, will bear also all our Sorrows and Grievs. It is our own *Will* and *Desire*, that it should be with us as it is, or we fearfully dissemble with God, when we say, [*Thy Will be done,*] And, are we discontented that we have our *Will*? That our Prayers are Answered? Shall we set up our *Wills*, not only against his, but our own? Be
dis-

displeased our Requests are granted? Repine that his, and therewith our *Will* is done? Can there be any thing in the *Will* of God, his Servants should inordinately fear; the fulfilling of which is the care, desire, and business of their Lives? Every Commission is signed originally in Heaven; and God will not set his Hand to any thing that's really hurtful to his Children.

Though our troubles immediately proceed from second, from natural Causes, they are but as Instruments of his invisible hand, and govern'd by his Counsel, to do his pleasure. By being violent against the Instrument, we therein oppose the principal Agent. Afflictions are not accidental or casual, but directed, disposed, and managed by him, who doth nothing at random, or at peradventure; but with excellent Wisdom, and for excellent Ends; even for the good and advantage of Mankind in general, and particularly of those, who seem most to suffer by them. Men are but Ministers of his permissive Providence, to put it in execution. He *Wills* that in Righteousness and Judgment, which they *Act* with so much

much Malice, Cruelty, and Injustice. *Let him alone, and let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David* (b.) He doth God's Errand, though he vent his own Malice. Which may well make us Friends, at Peace, in perfect Charity with second Causes: to be so much in love with the *Will* of our heavenly Father, as even to fall in love with whatsoever serves it: Viewing them all in his Hand, readily doing his pleasure. What is it like, to beat the Rod, or bite the Stone: We will rather admire, and delight in their subserviency to him, than maligne their severe Influences upon us. Why repine ye at Injuries, Reproaches, or Sickneses? Why trouble ye the persons? They have wrought a good work; they execute his *Will*; they have an Errand to me from him; How could they come except they were sent? *All Distempers* march under his Standard; Advance and Retire under the Shadow of his Command: The voice of my Disease is, Am I come up hither without the Lord to afflict thee? The Lord hath said to me, Go up against this *Man* and afflict

(b) 1 Sam 16. 11.

him (c). The great God is willing to be pleased with what *we do*, but we are not pleased with what *he doth*: He finds no fault with our *Duties*, though attended with many Defects, if done in sincerity; we find fault with his *Providences*, though there's nothing in them but what bespeaks infinite Wisdom and Goodness: As if God were our *Steward*, not our *Lord*, we require of him with a *Confidence* proper only to those who ask *their own*; whilst, what we offer to him, is, with such an irreverent careless hand, as if we meant it rather an *Alms*, than an *Homage*. Beggars must not be Chusers: He's a presumptuous *Child*, that will make choice of his own *Rod*. He deserves to be cashier'd, to have his Name blotted out of Christ's Muster-Roll, who is not ready chearfully to march through all Ways and Weathers to accomplish his General's Design: He's of a degenerate spirit, indeed, whom the example of his Captain will not animate; that will take no share of the Hazards and Hardships of his Leader; that will not follow him with alacrity through all the Difficulties he

(c) Isa. 36. 10.

traces

traces before us : To follow him murmuring , not only extremely discredits him, but is all one as if we staid behind. If we bear our Burdens with a perpetual vexation, we deprive our selves of the Crown of Patience, the value whereof is inestimable, as the force of it hath been judged in all times Invincible, and made the prosperous envy their Sufferings ; who on the Dunghil, in a Dungeon, at the Stake, have continued under more grateful , hopeful circumstances, than those that scorn'd, reproach'd, or executed them : Fearlessly beheld the Racks, and Engines prepared for them ; been thankful to those that condemn'd them ; and regarded their Executioners, with the same eye *St. Peter* did the Angel, that brake off his Fetters to restore him to freedom : Chearfully receiv'd them, as those who brought the Keys of Paradise in the same hand wherewith they brought their Swords : Laugh'd at Torments ; courted Flames ; went out to meet Death in the blackest Dress : Their Minds still remaining erect, and unbroken ; bearing the weight of all Sufferings with Courage, Constancy, and Rejoycing.

cing. *Patience* hath cloath'd the Brow with confidence to face the Storms ; to entertain the Challenges of Earth and Hell : And hath forc'd such expressions of strength and fixedness, as hath amaz'd the feeble World, and asham'd the daring Infidel into strange Convictions of the Reward and Gain of Godliness, and its approaching Triumph : Whilst all the Glory of this terrestrial State, is easily wink'd into Blackness and Disdain. So distempered, crazie, and rotten, is the impatient, unresigned Soul, that he would be carried through the World in a *Sedan*, being unable to be jogg'd, or disturb'd in his way : To him, the Grasshopper is a burden, a light Affliction grievous. Every Minute of our Tranquility, is purchas'd with *Patience*. He that is sincere, and patient, cannot miss of Joy : He that shrinks from, and murmurs under his Burden ; on his *Death-bed* will remember, That, *by that time*, all his Sorrows had been past, and nothing remaining for him, but Rest, and Reward. Others suffer more, only the Patient receive the Advantages, and Recompence of Christian Suffering.

The

The unquiet *Astuations* of our Hearts, are their unmannerly Replies against God. I see *his Hand* at the bottom of the *Warrant*, that keeps the Peace in my Soul; and makes me not concern'd what I suffer, but with what Mind; how much I make of it; and shall receive for it: Not to strive so much against *Affliction*, as *Displeasure*. Removing punishment, may leave a greater, though insensible, in its room. He shall not offend me with punishment; so he punish me not with offending him. It may admit a question, Whether it be a more admirable Christian Exercise to *do Good*, or to *endure Evil*? *Doing*, is but one part of my Work, I must *suffer* the *Will* of God; which I may well with more chearfulness, because I can only in this Life. Let me suffer his *Will* while I may, I shall but a while, but eternally do it without suffering; where my Passive as well as my Active Obedience, shall be remembred, and rewarded. The Almighty's Sequestrations, are but better Compositions. I know, all shall work together *for my good*; therefore, if it be for my *good*, let this Cup pass from me, if it be for my *good*,

good, let it remain with me, until thou hast purged out my corruptions, perfected my Patience, beautified my Faith, strengthened my dependance, raised me entirely from all earthly delights, to heavenly.

O! when shall I have done quarrelling, and murmuring? Fretting, and repining? Carking, and Caring? When shall I be humble, and meek? Conformable, silent, and dependent? Contented, and cheerfully compliant? When shall I, not out of *necessity*, or, with *reluctancy*, but *choice*; not only submit, but assent to, and justifie thee in all thy Dispensations? Not only hear, and accept of the Rod, but kiss it? Look up, adore, and think worthy thoughts, and honourable of thee? When shall thy Interest be so wholly planted and establisht in my Soul, as no other may be able to grow there? When shall I quit all self-ends, and be freely at the disposal of thee? Reckon, and endeavour it as my only Interest to serve thy Will? My greatest perfection to be nothing in my self, to have nothing of my own distinct from thee, to commit all to thee, to be great in thee, to be filled with thee? Not to reckon any thing

thing I have, but despise it in comparison of thee; live to, and for thee; enjoy all things as in, and under thee?

Behold, I stand ready here for thy Service; I am prepared for any Employment, I am girt for any Encounter; do with me what thou wilt; deal as thou pleakest with me; raise me, or depress me; lift me up, or cast me down; lead me to the right hand, or to the left; turn me to what side thou pleakest; I am thine, and at thy disposal: Thou hast lent me to, but not for my self. If thou wilt afflict me, afflict me; if thou wilt try me, try me. If my Patience must serve thee in Poverty; if my Disgrace must glorifie thy Truth; if my Shame must honour my God: My Poverty, shall be my Riches; my Disgrace, shall be my Honour; my Shame, shall be my Glory; my Affliction, shall be my Happiness; my Service, shall be my Reward. Use me as thou pleakest, so thou use me to *thy Glory*: and *so* I am sure thou wilt; for, otherwise thou canst not do. Thou canst not deny thy own Glory, and therefore thou canst not govern me amiss, who alway esteem my self well used, where I serve thy

thy Honour in the World, though in the lowest Office, or sharpest Affliction. I submit to thy direction, I follow thee without reply, dispute, or delay, or hesitation; for, what shall I get by resistance, but to be drag'd weeping, and to bear, being evil, what I might do sincerely by being good.

Encouragement from the Wisdom of GOD.

CONsider his infinite Wisdom, whereby he distinctly knows all things past, present, and to come. All obscure Administrations which seem so full of casual neglect, promiscuous scatterings, and wild contingences, is no disorder to him but an admirable contrivance and regularity. The thoughts of Men, the hearts of Kings, are in the hands of God. By his certain dispose, there's a necessity in every seeming undetermin'd Casualty (*d*). He who is unawares, accidentally slain by another, is delivered into his hands by God (*e*). An Arrow shot at ran-

(*d*) Gen. 22. 13, 14. 1 Sam. 9. 15, 16. (*e*) Exod. 21. 13.

dom, was directed by him to fulfil the Prediction of *Abab's* death (*f*). Amidst popular Tumults, and Inundations, Commotions, and publick Confusions, *the Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoyce, let the multitude of the Isles be glad thereof* (*g*). Though things seem huddled together, and to run at random, there's a wheel in a wheel, (*b*) (that turns every, yea, the least wheel;) in them the eye of Providence, that with deliberate care, and forecast, directs them in their turning and revolutions to the best and most certain issue. *His kingdom ruleth over all* (*i*).

Which may justly check our extravagant thoughts that would either presume to know all the reclusive ends of Omniscience, or peremptorily judge of the fitness of means to ends unknown. And may reduce us (discomposed) to composed minds, notwithstanding all changes, alterations, or seeming confusions; to conclude *that* Oeconomy wisest, that's chosen by a Wisdom so boundless, that can at once survey all Expedients; and so unby-

(*f*) 1 King. 22.34. (*g*) Psal. 97. 1. (*b*) Ezek. 1.16.
(*i*) Psal. 103. 19.

assed, that it hath no interest to chuse any, but for its being fittest. The *great Physitian* of Mankind, knows their various tempers, and distempers; weighs and measures out the quality, quantity, and duration of their Sufferings: Diets and orders them, as he sees most behoveful for recovery or prevention: Is too compassionate, too wise, to let his *distracted Patients* prescribe their own course of Physick; or have their clamorous will: Or, to decline our fond and peevish Cavils, thuffie and discompose those mysterious, profound Contrivances, whose Wisdom engages the attention, and exacts the wonder of Angels.

How long then (my Soul) will it be, e're thou makest an end of murmuring words? Mark, and afterwards (if thou canst) speak on. Shall God alter the Methods of his governing the World, to humour and comply with ignorant, inconsistent Man? *Shall the Earth be forsaken for thee? Shall the Rock be removed out of its place (k)?* Shall the Ax lift up it self against him that heweth therewith? There's a Jest indeed! He that formed

(k) Job. 18. 2. &c.

the intellectual eye, shall not he see? He that made intellectual Spirits, shall not he understand? He looks upon all the World at once, sees what reference one part hath to another; and disposes the affairs of particular Nations, and Persons, (how fatal soever Calamities, and their consequences may be to them) as may serve and attain his great design.

He overlooks Satan's Conclave, what evil designs are hatched and plotted against his People: And can, not only frustrate their utmost policies and endeavours, but make them frustrate themselves; to accomplish those very ends, they were design'd to defeat: So that, what they seek to decline, they promote by their striving against. Thus the contrivers of *Babel* went to make themselves a Name, and to prevent dispersion, laid their Plot so hopeful, that they had engaged no less than *Mankind*; and Designs as raised, as their intended Fabrick, as *high as Heaven* (and so high indeed they built: For God saw them all the while) but the Policy of the ambitious Builders, being contrary to the charitable Decree of God, to have the Earth peopled; he

made use of that very Conspiracy that brought them together, to effect that which they conspir'd to prevent; so that now, the remotest parts of the inhabited World, are but the Colonies of *Babel*, whose scatter'd Architects have indeed made themselves a Name, but upon a quite contrary Account than *they* intended, or expected. Thus the purblind envy of *Joseph's Brethren*, having made themselves resolve to prevent his Dream of his future Superiority over them, made them think, that, by selling him for a *Slave*, they had taken sufficient order he should never come to be their *Master*. His being sold into *Egypt* was made use of, by the wise Orderer of humane Affairs, to make him in effect, *Lord*, both of *it*, and *them*. His nearness to slaughter, his being merchandiz'd, his danger by the rage of his Mistress, his imprisonment, his suffering such misfortune as might seem an oversight and neglect of Providence; as if it had forgotten the promotion *Joseph* was designed to, did all mightily conduce not only to his advancement, but safety and preservation of that whole Family, which was then the visible Church.

So

So that, if each of his Brethren had given him as much Money as they sold him for, it had not been so great a Kindness, as he received from their intended Cruelty. Thus the proud Favorite of *Absuerus* eat the Fruit of that Tree, which himself planted: Questionless thought he could scarce miss his end, when he provided for *Mordecai* that fatal *Gibbit*; which if he had not erected, probably himself might have escaped; nor been forced to hold the stirrop to his only eye-fore, and to be Herauld of his Honour; and at last hang'd up a publick Spectacle of scorn and contempt, without any remains or appearances of his former Honour; unless this was it, that the Gallows he hung on, was so many Cubits higher, than for the Rabble of vulgar Malefactors. Thus *David*, after he was promis'd, and anointed to be *King*, could scarce live a quiet life with his Countrey-men: Instead of being brought up at Court, as a *King's Son*, he had not the favour of a *common Subject*: But, hunted up and down, till at last driven quite out of his Kingdom, into the Wilderness like a common Out-law, and there followed

by a company of discontented Persons, ready, on every trifling occasion to Revolt from him (as before from *Saul*) if not, to stone him; spoil'd of his Goods, Wives, Children, &c. yet was this distress in the event contrived to his advantage: For, having afterwards pursued the *Amalekites*, he not only recovers his own, but an abundance of other Spoil from them, as served him for rich Presents, to renew and confirm the friendship of his Well-wishers in *Israel*; that after the death of *Saul* (which presently followed) he might by their free Vote, be chosen to succeed him. Thus *Jonah*, when sent to *Nineveh* about so weighty a matter, as the safety of that great and populous City, and that too, when their destruction was within Ken, but *forty days off*, that he should now make delays, flee to *Tarsish*; and upon such a flight, run himself into hazards; might seem to argue some carelessness in the Government of Providence: Yet, this his offence was so wisely manag'd in the event, that it mightily advantaged the main end of his Errand; which it seem'd most directly to oppose. His danger, and miraculous deliverance

liverance being related, probably by the *Mariners*, was a special occasion, that his Preaching proved so successful. Thus *Augustus* in Taxing his Subjects, paid Tribute to the King of Heaven; he brings Stones to build God's Temple, whilst he intends to raise his own Exchequer; his Political Action, had an Ecclesiastical Aspect; his end in Taxing the World, which was to fill his Coffers and enrich himself, is used by God as a means to fulfil the Prophecie of Christ's Birth at *Bethlehem*. Thus the dissention between *Paul* and *Barnabas*, when the Christian Church was in its Beginning and Infancy; that the two chief Founders and Members of it, should fall at variance among themselves, seem'd such an unseasonable Breach, that an Enemy could not have wished a worse: What could more thwart the promulgation of the Gospel of Peace, than the contentions of those that preached it? Yet, by these two parting asunder, like two mighty Streams, spreading themselves several ways, mightily conduced to the watering the barren, thirsty Corners of the World. Thus the *old Serpent* himself, even in his chief Master-piece,

found himself the most overmatched : No doubt he highly applauded his own subtilty, and seem'd to have taken the likeliest way devisable, to his impious end; when, having made *Herod* and *Pilate* Friends (to make them joint Enemies to Christ) upon such terms, that the Lamb of God should be the Victim of their new Confederacy, he had brought the *Jews* and *Gentiles* to conspire against their *common Saviour* ; ingaging them in a ruinous and tragic Conspiracy to kill the Prince of Life; and by that unparalleled Crime, at once to destroy the *Devil's* chief *Enemy*, and make God *Theirs* : Yet the Event sufficiently manifested, this pursued Prey overcame the seeming Conquerour, and made all his Followers, Sharers in the Conquest: *Death* and the *Devil* by getting, lost the Victory ; for, whilst *Death* fed but as a Waiter on Sin's Trencher ; or, with *Noah's Crow*, on the Carrion of Corruption, the whole World was both its Slaughter-house, and Kitchen ; but when it would needs (with *Judas*) be swallowing the indigestible piece of Immortality that could not see Corruption (the Lord of Life) he was choked
by

by the Attempt; he broke in sunder, and all his Bowels gushed out; the Dead that slept arose; and that sting of Death stuck fast in the empty Grave, that swallowed Death it self in Victory: So that, all those whose sins are there buried, are enabled triumphantly to say, *O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave where is thy victory* (1). *Pharaoh's* Daughter's heart weeps over the Tears of *Moses*; she pays his own Mother for Nursing her own Son; brings him up like a Prince in *Egypt*, to be Prince of *Israel*. God makes his Enemies foster, and bring up their own Supplanter, and Destroyer. Whereever the Church's Enemies are, in respect of their place; or, whatsoever, in regard of their persons; howsoever joyned, or disjoyned in regard of their affections; all their projects and practices, even amidst their mutual Jars, conspire in a Sacred Harmony, as if they were entred into a Holy League, or Solemn, Sacred Combination for, and shall all end in, the good of his Chosen. Saith *Martin Luther*, to the *Elector of Saxony* (perceiving the Cause of the Church to go backward) Let your

(1) 1 Cor. 15. 55.

Highness be sure, the Church's Business is far otherwise ordered in Heaven, than it is by the *Emperor*, and *States of Norinberg*. And I am glad that Christ is King; for otherwise, I had been utterly out of Heart and Hope, (saith *Myconius* in a Letter to *Calvin*) upon view of the Church's Enemies.

Limit not God to means: Let him chuse his own Weapons, to fight his own Battle. So long as he hath a Cause in the World, he can never want ways to maintain it, who by his Death conquered all his Enemies, and the Kingdoms of the Earth, with one File of poor Fisher-men, whose greatest Art and Policy lay, in mending their Nets, and laying Snares for the silly Fish. The Church's Enemies cannot approve themselves so malicious, as they are: He sometimes so holds them in, that Standers-by, think them favourable: *It is in the power of my hand* (saith *Laban* to *Jacob*) *(m)* *to do you hurt: But the God of your Fathers spake unto me yesternight, saying, take thou heed, that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.* Thank him for nought, he could

(m) Gen. 31. 29.

do

do him hurt, but *God* would *not* let him. Let Men use what means they please, he hath still the security of the end. Whoever rules, he over-rules; and will prevent or order, disorders.

And, shall we have so fond regard to our selves, as not to be *Content*, that the *Wisdom* of *God*, should serve his own turn in managing All? Be so narrow, private spirited, as to expect all his Providences in governing the World, should center in our present particular Conveniency, and Happiness? Humane Events, and several Persons Interests, are so interwoven by him, that they have a mutual dependence among themselves: And their meetings, which we think *Casual*, are *twice* necessary, as his Decree, and for many ends. We must consider our selves as pieces of the Universe; and Engines which that great Workman sets on going, for executing his ends; which being all good, all means tending to them, must be so also. We must therefore bear our Crosses, not only with Patience, but Joy and Thankfulness, accounting our selves happy, we are Instruments in his Hand, to do his Work, and advance his Glory:
Which

Which must needs highly please him, doing that willingly, which others do out of constraint. How great an Evil is Discontent with our Allotment? By desiring to have our Will in such a particular, we perhaps should cross God in a thousand, he hath to bring about; because 'tis possible, a thousand things may depend upon that one thing we would have to be otherwise than it is. I will be henceforth willing to be crossed in some few things, that his work may go on in all; and his end attained or furthered in *many things*, by the *one thing* I am crossed in. 'Tis impossible every humour should be satisfied, because particular desires, besides their opposition to one another, are inconsistent with the general design. That difference which there is between particular things, times, and persons, much conduces to the beauty, and convenience of the whole; while some particular Events, singly considered, seem prejudicial. The whole Contexture of Affairs in their operation, shall prove in the issue, for the best to those that love God. We forget we are all Servants to the same Master, who disposes all the Concerns of
Men

Men by an unerring Wisdom, and is alone to determine the place we shall serve him in. We think, that Providence which governs others, should only serve us; and distribute to us, not what it, but our selves think good. We murmur at a *Prince* for indulging any thing to a private Favourite, to the publick disadvantage; and we murmur at God, for not doing the like. 'Tis great Insolence in me, to think he should be more concern'd to humour me, then those multitudes of others, who have the same appetites and affections. Most Men desire more, but every Man desires to keep what he hath; And, how should one part of the World be supply'd, without the diminution of the other? If God satisfie not all, why should any particular person look, that his Appetite alone should be indulged too? The common Father of mankind disposes things, for the public advantage of this great Family; and there cannot be a more vile contempt of his Wisdom, than sullenly to dispute his choice and orders. Men look upon themselves as single persons, without reference to the Community whereof they
are

are Members; else, they would rather endeavour to *become their places* wherein they are set, than be perpetually projecting for a *Change*. Would we honestly and diligently imploy our selves where God hath set us, we should find it a direct Road to Advancement; or to have a better effect, that is, sweeten our present Condition, divert our minds from mutinous reflections on others height, and our own lowness. God hath placed none of us in so barren a Soyl, so forlorn a State, but there's *something* in it which may afford us Comfort; if we husband *that* to the utmost, it's scarce imaginable what Improvement, even he that appears the most miserable, may make of his Condition. But, if in a sullen humour, we quarrel at what we should enjoy, and will not cultivate our own Field, because we have more mind to our Neighbours, we may thank our selves if we starve, or die of discontent. 'Tis surely but a modest demand in the behalf of God, that we should allow him as much priviledge in this World, as every Peasant claims in his Cottage, to be *Master there*, and dispose of *his Household* as he thinks

thinks fit ; to say to this Servant, stand thou, work thou there ; to another, do this, and he to do it ; and would we afford him this liberty, there would be an immediate end put to all Clamours and Complaints. And, when we are content with God's Allowance, then like the *Israelites* Manna, it is very good, there's a Blessing in it ; but, when we will be reaching out, gathering more, or, desire to keep it longer than God would have us, there will be Worms (nothing that is good) in it.

Wish Events according to the secret order of the grand Disposer, looking on all, not as *Casualties*, but *Commands*, and thou shalt always have *thy Will* ; nothing can fall out contrary to *it*, if thou totally denyest *it*, and transform'st it unto *his* ; and *desir'st* no more in thy heart, than thou may'st lawfully ask of him in prayer. Let's not create such Diseases to our selves, as we cannot declare to our Physician. When we Address our selves to God for Relief, let's seriously consider, and single out those desires that are worthy of that solemn deprecation ; and we shall then find, we have in that, prejudg'd
all

all our former discontents, as frivolous, or wicked. And then, sure we cannot think fit to harbour them, but must for shame dismiss them, since they are such, as we dare not avow to him, from whom alone we can expect Relief. The more impatient my longings are, the less in Reason should be my hopes; for, *Mutiny* is no such endearing quality, as to render any Man a *Darling* to God. The discontented Man, is angry with God, for which, to be sure, God is angry with him. Nothing pleases him better, than a quiet submission. Fretting never removed (but hath always weightned) a Burden; nor procured (but prevented many) a Blessing. The Father continues to correct the froward Child. Submission gains us the thing we desire, or what's better for us. What we get by *discontent*, we seldom enjoy with *comfort*. He will satisfy our Wills, when we can submit to his: Not easily deny our suit, when we can deny our selves. None stay longer at Heaven's Gate, than he who would be serv'd at first knock: He speeds best, who delivers in his Petition, and stays, until God please to answer. We often shorten
our

our Mercies, by hastening them : He doubles them, by delaying ; and makes us amends both for our Prayers, and Patience.

No *Policy* can provide against all Events, but that, which advises us to forsake the place where they are, and to carry us up, out of our selves, and our own wills, into the will of God ; where all is a perfect serenity, lie down in peace and concord together. To such, there is no Enemy, nothing is contrary ; all things serve them, and fall out to them as they would ; having no will of their own, referring all things to the will of God : To them there is no death, or slavery, but to sink down thence, and be engaged in carnal, uncertain Designs, and Interests. He that acknowledges God's Providence, VVisdom, and Goodness, hath a sufficient *Amulet* against all *Solicitudes*, much more, *Repinings*. VVe may well question our own Judgment, when we repine, that our Souls are secured at the cost of our Bodies : And that's certainly the worst, the unkindest design he hath upon us. Our stripes are not more severe, than he sees necessary, in order
to

to our good. So that, not only *Religion*, but *Self-love* teaches it to be *our Choice*, as well as *his*. He sees to the bottom of us, and those things we desire, what operation they would have upon us: Whilst we, that neither know our selves, nor them, make but random guesſes, and worſe choiſes. He's more wiſe to diſcern, and more careful to provide what's really good for us, than we our ſelves. He conſiders not, what might *pleaſe*, but, what may *not hurt* us; our *Interest*, more than our *Importunity*; whilst we might periſh by the grant of our deſires. The experience we have had of his Care and Providence over us, and the folly of our own Election, may well bring us to diſtruſt our ſelves, and rely upon him in all our ſecular Affairs. We truſt thoſe whom we have cauſe to think underſtand things better than our ſelves; and rely upon (Lawyers and Phyſicians, &c.) Men in their own Faculty, becauſe we account them more competent Judges; And may we not much more here? Shall we be preſcribing to God? Or be diſpleaſed, if his Diſpenſations do not exactly anſwer our Fancies? Whilst

we

we impatiently complain of our wants, we tacitly, blasphemously, atheistically tax God, to want Wisdom, Power, or Goodness, whereby he should supply us. Can there be any thing more formidable, than *for him to let us alone*? Not to meddle any further with our Affairs, but comply with our Choice, gives us up to our own wills and desires, and order all things to happen according to them? To be thus left, every Man that loves himself, and understands his own Interest, would look upon himself as the most forlorn abandon'd wretch on Earth; as one utterly excluded from the greatest blessing that belongs to a Creature: And, if he had any hopes of acceptance, would upon his bended Knees resign back himself, and all his concerns, into his hands again; beseeching him, above all things not to leave him to himself, not to throw him from his Care and Protection; promising never to repine against him more, but cheerfully to submit to his heavenly Will, how severely soever he should think good to deal with him.

Encon-

Encouragement from the Goodness of GOD.

CONsider the Love, Mercy, and Goodness of God. The Divine *Eudoxia*, the self-moving propensity and good pleasure of his Will, first turned the heart of God, and combin'd his Attributes into a Federal Association, to work all one way, for the good of Believers. All his *Providences* acted upon the Stage of the World, are but several manifestations of it, in different dresses and disguises. Instruments of Cruelty are not in his Habitation. He shaves us with a Razor that is *hired* (*n*). And, when he causes grief, hath Compassion. The whole Creation is a visible Monument of his Perfections (Wisdom, Power, and Goodness) and a sufficient Argument and Foundation for our reliance upon him: *Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth* (*o*). He is good to all, but his mercy is more especially extended to such as are in a state of misery; they are proper, and particular subjects of his care, and kindness, and compassi-

(*n*) Isa. 7. 20. (*o*) Psal. 124. 8.

on ;

on; the *Fatherless*, and *Widows*, the *Prisoners*, the *Poor*, and the *Stranger*, he is the helper of the *Friendless* (p). So that, that which among Men is usually the chief occasion to take off their affection and kindness, is a principal Argument, and frequently made use of by good Men, to entitle us to his favour: *O go not far from me, for trouble is nigh at hand, and there is none to help me: I am in misery, O hear me speedily* (q). He pities, where others despise: He is concern'd, where Men are careless: He fixes his eye, and opens his ear, where a proud Creature hath neither eye to see, nor ear to hear. The Poor are not forgotten by God's love: He respects the meanest Artizan, equally, with the greatest Potentate. He slights not the helpless oppressed. That which is a good cause in it self, is always so to him, be it whose it will. Whole Mountains of Gold, fly up in the Ballance in his Hand, against a Grain of Justice. He judges every Man's right. He sees and pities the Afflictions of the Miserable: He hears the Cries of

(p) Psal. 10. 14. and 143. 14. and 146. 9. (q) Psal. 22. 11. and 69. 17. and 102. 2.

the Indigent. The Sighs of the Prisoner, in the deepest Vault, sounds in his Powsels. He whispers comfort to the doleful moans, deserving commiseration. *O Lord of hosts, blessed is the Man that trusteth in thee (r).*

What means then these scruples of his kindness? These struggles under our Burden? Why are we so prone to look upon him with blood-shot eyes, in the ruin of his Creatures? As if he were some austere tyrannical Being, apter to affright and terrific, than allure, and attract us; and had only sanguine Laws, writ with the Blood of his Subjects? Why must the smart of the Flesh, pervert the Judgment of our Minds? The feeling of bodily Evils, destroy all sense of his unchangeable Goodness? *What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil (s).* Indeed, *we shall receive evil* whether we will or no; But shall we not (kiss the hand, and) *receive it so, i. e.* in the same manner, with the same mind as we receive good? With heart, and hand; cheerfully, thankfully, gladly? With much reve-

(r) Psal. 84. 12. (s) Job. 2. 10.

rence,

rence, veneration, and respect to God, and his ways of Providence towards us? This were an absurd thing once to imagine; a blind Man may see this; 'tis so plain, a fool may understand it; the reason lies all in sight, that we should *thus receive Evil*, from the *Donor of all our Good*. The least part of which we have not *deserv'd*, but much more than all the *Evil* we suffer, which also is but another method of doing us good. And welcome him, as well, when he comes to take, as give: Carve *Contentment* out of every Dish set before us: Chearfully digest the hardest fare: Bless God full or fasting. Shall we not eat the Crust with the Crum?

(lower,
*Laugh we to lick the sweet, and shall we
 If God be pleas'd to send a little shower.*

How great a share may all, who are not wanting to themselves, find they have in the mercies of God, that consider the multitude, and magnitude of them? How much are they oblig'd by them? How *little reason* have they to murmur against him? How *much*, to be thankful for them?

them? Due Proportion, integrity of Parts, perfection of Senses, strength of Nature, exercise of our Faculties, mediocrity of Health and Appetite, vigour of Digestion. Mercies in the members of our Bodies, in the faculties of our Souls, in our Neighbour-hood, Habitations, Families, Friends, Relations, Estates, Names, an Interest in the Hearts and Prayers of God's People, (VVhat a complex mercy is that?) All our days attended with a careful Providence; we live upon his bountiful allowance; which makes this VVorld an easie passage to another. The light of the Sun, the influences of Heaven, the advantages of the Elements; Air to breath in, Earth to tread on, Fire to warm us, VVater to cool and cleanse us, Cloaths to cover us, Food to nourish us, Sleep to refresh us, Houses to shelter us, variety of Creatures to feed and delight us. How many lose their lives, to preserve ours? How many Mercies go to the making up one meals meat? From how many Countries doth Providence serve, in the provision of our Table? VVhat a complex of second Causes, doth God subordinate for the producing the
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coarſeſt piece of Bread, which the poor-
eſt Man eats? *I will bear* (ſaith the Lord)
the Heavens, and they ſhall bear the Earth,
and the earth ſhall bear the corn, and the
wine, and the oyl, and they ſhall bear Jez-
reel (t.) There's not a Morſel we eat,
but is provided in Heaven, before ſet up-
on our Table. Who can reckon up the
mercies of one year, of one week, of one
day? *Good Men thankfully obſerve them*
coming in every day by whole loads. Blessed
be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with his
benefits (u): And, never appear before
God, but ſee themſelves *incompaſs'd with*
them: I will come into thy houſe in the mul-
titude of thy mercy (w). How many Pro-
vidences concur in one nights reſt and
protection? We have a ſtronger Guard
about us, than *Solomon's* threſcore vali-
ant Men about his Bed, of the valiant
of *Iſrael*, though they all hold Swords,
being expert in War; and every Man
hath his Sword upon his Thigh, becauſe
of fear in the night (x). We cannot
ſufficiently prize that *ſecret Mercy* that
lodges with us, and gives us reſt every

(t) Hoſ. 2. 21, 22. (u) Pſal. 68. 19. (w) Pſal. 5. 7. (x)
Can. 3. 7, 8.

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night.

night. How many burning Fevers doth cool *Sleep* extinguish? From how many *Deaths* doth that *Brother* and *Image* of *Death* deliver us? What a mercy is it that we are not nightly scar'd with *Dreams*, and terrifi'd with *Visions*? That *Satan's Chain* is not let loose upon us? That we *sleep* in *safety*, and comfortably behold the *morning light*? That sudden *Palsies* do not unloose our *Nerves*, or *painful Convulsions* shrink *them* up? That we are able to descend our *stairs* without horror and confusion? That when we are down, some *Messenger* of *Death* doth not apale us with terrible Tidings, and give us a bitter Break-fast. That we have *Hearts* and *Spirits* to call upon the God of our Mercies in our *Families*, as an Antidote against the Evils of the succeeding day. That we find all our Household in Health, and the Rapines of Night-violence, not stript us naked of all our Goods. When we walk abroad, that we suck not in contagious Atomes from the Air, that the *East-wind* doth not blast us; that sudden violent Rains, in hasty Walking, doth not cool our sweat into surfeit, or that we hurry not the blood

blood into fermentation, for new and surprising Distempers? That the *Earth* we tread on, suddenly opens not its mouth to swallow us up, as it did those Rebels in *Numbers*: that we wrench not our Ankles, or other Joints, upon plain ground; and dash not our Foot against a Post or Stone to our great prejudice: That Tiles or Timber falling from Houses, the sweeping of Gutters, casual Arrows, Bullets, Stones, Fires, rude Men, mad, irrational Creatures do not dispatch us: An accidental Coachman's Whip, some great Croud, some unexpected Disaster bring us not to the Evening of our Lives. How insignificant would be our wariness, did not he watch over us? That Lightning doth not lick up our Spirits; or a hot Thunderbolt rend us asunder: That we can repose our Bodies in any grateful posture: That we have a *Table* and *Appetite*; and are not unable to *crave a Blessing*, or to *receive it*: That we are not by Cares and Vexations within, rendred snappish and currish at home and abroad: That every bit doth not choak us: And we are not carryed from our *Table* to our *Pillow*, and thence

to the Chambers of Death: That by stopping the Channels of Nature, we perish not: That by letting Blood we lose not an Artery; or the cutting a Cord doth not rankle to Death: That passion or hastiness doth not intangle us; and our Words are not wrested to the losing a Friend, or raising an Enemy: That our Houses do not intomb us in their own Rubbish: The Fire doth not burn us to Ashes; Armies of Rats or Mice do not devour us. Yea, did we see the admirable Frame of this crasie Tenement of our Soul, and upon what slender golden Wires, and nice Labyrinths, in those wonderful passages in the Clock-work of our Bodies, the continuance of our Lives depends; we should be astonish'd at the Divine Goodness; and instead of wondering when any are taken away, stand amazed at our continuance one moment: For, if either the Vessel or Liquors in them, be disturbed, we soon pass away, and are no more: Yea, if the inward Crasis of the Brain be touched, Men of the grandest parts (were it not for the constant influx of Divine Mercy) would soon shrink into *Ideots*, and prove mis-

rable Objects of scorn and pity. We should reckon our mercies, not by miles, or hours, but steps and minutes. The very health, ease, peace, and safety of one day, of one night, of one hour, deserves the thankfulness of many. How many mercies in one meal, or meeting? If the *evils* we *suffer*, call for our *Prayers*, those we are *free from*, call for our *Thankfulness*. 'Tis as great a mercy, to be *kept from miseries*, as to be *delivered out of them*; to enjoy *health*, as to be recovered from *sickness*. One relating his great danger by a fall off his Horse; saying, *He never received such a deliverance: Yes,* (answered his Friend) *a hundred times; so often as you have rid and not fallen.* God's privative mercies seem to contend with his positive. We owe no less, for *what we are not*, than for *what we are*: *Not Dumb, not Lame, not Blind, not Deaf, not Decrepit, nor Distracted, not tormented with Gout, Stone, Strangury, Ulcers; not fill'd with Botches, Boils, noysom Distempers, not scraping our selves with a Potsherd upon the Dunghil; not Harbourless, Friendless, Helpless, Easeless; not begging our Bread from door to*

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door ;

door ; *not* in Prison, *not* Banished ; *not* in the hands of cruel Tyrants and Oppressors : And yet, even in such a condition the Church in Captivity finds out a [*not*] that exceedingly affected her, and makes her bear all with Patience : *It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not (y)* [Mercies] for the number, intimating a *multitude* of favours in this one *Act* of his forbearance [Compassions] for the nature of them, which signifies, *tender, affectionate Mercy*. Our Mercies are more , and greater than our Afflictions ; our *Sufferings* may be told, but our *Mercies* are innumerable : We have more left, than we have lost. However *it is* now, *it hath been better* with us ; and why should to days sickness, make us forget yesterdays health ; this days hunger, unthankful for our former meals ; our present scarcity and penury, render insignificant, bury all our former ease and plenty ? We commit new *sins*, while we are unthankful, either for enjoying his former benefits, or escaping the punishment of our former sins ; or, are negligent of

(y) Lam. 3. 22.

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our obedience to those precepts which require us to preserve an equality of temper, in all the changes of our life, lest by repining when we are deprived of some benefits which we formerly enjoy'd, we take an unjust occasion to neglect our gratitude for having been happy so long. Nor is it so bad with us, as with others; How many better than we, would think themselves *fine* in our *Cast Garments*? *Feasted*, in the *reversions* of our Tables? At *ease* under our Sickneses, Pains, and Diseases? Even in Heaven, if they had but the least part of the Remnants of our Fortunes.

But, as to *Spirituals*, the worst day in our week, is better than the Sabbaths of many of the Churches of Christ: The Gleanings of *Ephraim*, better than the Vintage of *Abiezer*: Which should make us overlook all temporal Sufferings, with a holy cheerfulness and triumph: *For the People shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: Thou shalt weep no more: He will be very gracious unto thee, at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet*
D 4 *shall*

shall not thy Teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy Teachers. And thine ears shall hear a voice behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, &c. (z). And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction with joy in the Holy Ghost (a). Who can complain of temporal Troubles, who considers how he is obliged by spiritual Mercies? Our Election before the world, Redemption from the world, Preservation in the world, Preparation for a better world. Making sute to us, that we would love him: Commanding us, to do good to our selves: Intreating that duty from us, that he might Compel: Taking it kindly, that we give him of his own: Rewarding us for that, which by his grace only, we can perform: Pardoning us, when we fall short in our duty: Giving us repentance, that he may forgive us; and grace, that he may receive us into favour. The liberty, ability, and acceptance of our Prayers; the assistance of his Holy Spirit; ministry of his Angels; pledges of his endless love; restraining

(z) Isa. 30. 19, &c. (a) 1 Thef. 1. 6.

us from sin. His forbearance in the days of our Ignorance ; unwearied patience, notwithstanding our continued Rebellions : Earnest Intreaties of us, when passionately bent upon our own Destruction. Wholsom Counsels ; publick , and private Admonitions ; the restraints of fear and love. Continuing so many undeserved Benefits ; pursuing us with his merciful kindness, notwithstanding our provocations. For those infinite favours, whereby he hath supported our state, enriched our spirits, comforted us in our sorrows, relieved our necessities, blessed us in our places, defended our persons, &c. For what he hath *laid up for us in Heaven* ; the very fore-thoughts of which, is sufficient to support us under all the hardships we can meet with, in our passage to it. How many millions of Mercies meet together, to make up the Apostles one total Sum ? *According as his divine power, hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness (b)*. Who can find out, not only the number of particular Mercies ; but, the several kinds, and species, the various heads, the ge-

(a) 2 Pet. 1. 3.

neral sorts of those Mercies, that contain multitudes under them? *Thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds (c)*, i.e. as immense, and unmeasurable as Heaven it self. David's Arithmetick fail'd him; he was forced to leave off numbering when he attempted it, and say, *Many O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: They cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: If I should declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbred (d)*.

And now, shall we not cheerfully receive an imaginary Evil, from whom we receive so much real Good? Shall we grumble, if he gratifie not a particular appetite, who loads us with his Benefits? Childishly throw down all, if he gives us not that piece we would have? Murmur under one Affliction, and overlook a thousand Mercies, who have forfeited our right to all, and are yet kept in the possession of so many? Forsake the enjoyment of so many Blessings, to pine away in the company of our Wants? Neither look forward to his future, nor back-

(c) Psal. 57. 10. (d) Pl. 40. 5.

ward, to his past Benefits? That Man's Piety was ingenious, who, having *one of his Eyes* put out, by falling upon his staff, gave God thanks that his Staff was not *forked*, for so he might by that fall, have lost *them both*. Set we our present Sickness and Sorrows, against our former Health and Comforts; and impartially compare, the Mercies we enjoy, with the Miseries we undergo; and our Consolations will be found much more to abound than our Sufferings.

Let us therefore be more careful to keep a reckoning of the *Goods* we enjoy, than we have lost: And entertain more joy we had them so long; than sadness, we lost them so soon: So shall we make present ill days good, by a thankful remembrance of good days past, and obtain of him new matter of thanks. Using the World as a *Feast*, soberly, chearfully feeding on the Fare set before us; and when it's taken away, rise and give Thanks; and not be such ungrateful Guests to the *Master of the Feast*, that hath so liberally treated us, as to reckon all past, for nothing, but grudge when he takes away, instead of thanking him for
his.

his good Cheer. Shall we make earnest sute to him, when we would borrow, and be offended with him when we are call'd to pay? He's an ill, ungrateful *Debtor*, from whom the *Lender* cannot ask *his own*, but shall be like thereby to *lose a Friend*. Let's cast our eye upon what we have, and could not well be without, as well as upon what we fain would have, but may want: And consider, how useful the things we already have, are; how ill we could spare them; how much worse we should be, than now we are, without them; how many want them; how thankful they would be for them: No room then will be found for murmuring. *Thankfulness* will insensibly undermine our *Impatience*; it being impossible to be at once, *thankful*, and *murmuring*. Every *continuance* of his *Mercies*, is a *new Donation*: And, shall we take no notice of them, because they are common? Shall his Blessings grow invisible, by their being always before us? Shall he lose his Thanks, by multiplying his Favours? Whatsoever we receive, is still upon account of new Bounty; an *Alms*, not a *Tribute* or *Reward* from him,

him, from whom we receive our Being, to whom we owe our selves, but can claim nothing from him.

We make some formal Acknowledgments; we customarily *give Thanks*. at our *Meals*, that we receive all from him: Yet, certainly, he cannot be thought to do *that in earnest*, that hath all the time of his eating been grumbling, that his Table abounds not with such Delicacies as his Neighbours. God loves a *cheerful Receiver*, as well as a *cheerful Giver*. He that hath least, hath enough to oblige, not only *acquiescence*, but *thankfulness*. Tho' he hath not all he wishes, yet he hath that which is more valuable, than that he complains to want, enough to satisfy an humble modest mind: And which he himself could less spare, were he put to his choice. Let him but consider how many undeserved Blessings he daily enjoys; and, whether those he so impatiently raves after, be not much inferior to them: Whether he would quit all those he hath, for them he wants; and if he would not; then let him judge, how unreasonable his Repinings are, when himself confesses he hath the better part
of

of worldly Happiness, and never any Man living, had all. The very consideration of the undeserved Mercies we have enjoy'd, should alleviate all our present Sufferings. *I have made an ill use of thy Mercies, if I have not learn'd to be content with thy Corrections*; and be not so thankful for past Favours, that the memory of them be able to put away the sense of present Miseries. Considering the good I undeservedly enjoy, and the evil I suffer not, but deserve, and others groan under; I will reckon every Evil I am free from, so many new Favours, easie Corrections, among my Blessings, and any Blessing infinitely obliging: And trust God in all Conditions; and rejoyce in that trust; and hope even against hope; and be *Content* in the greatest streights, when there's nothing visible that should give *Contentment*. *Content*, to do well, and suffer ill; to be neglected and despised, where we deserve honour and advancement; to be poor, without advantages of growing rich; to be sick and afflicted, without hopes of recovering health and felicity in this World; to see our friends wronged; our enemies prosper;

per ; our estate decay ; and our charges increase.

All things are permitted, acted, or disposed by him, who is wisdom and goodness it self, and so, are the result of the most perfect wisdom and goodness ; though short-sighted Creatures cannot see it : and shall work together for our good, (so long as we keep close to our Sovereign good) to heal, or quicken ; try, or discover ; sanctifie, or prepare ; the fruit of infinite love, and tryal of ours. We should lay up in the Ark of our Memories, not only the *Pot of Manna*, the Bread of Life ; but, even *Aarons Rod*, the Scourges of Correction ; which should be so far from abating, that they should quicken and heighten the sense of Mercy, and make us look upon them as additional Mercies : *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me* (e). The Lord forgive (saith a *Martyr*) my unthankfulness for persecution. *Job* (f) blesses God not only *at*, but *after meat* ; for all was taken away. And, *Thus saith the Lord, so will I acknowledge them that*

(e) Ps. 119.75. (f) Job 1.21.

are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place, into the Land of the Chaldeans [for their good] (g). The paths of Mercy are often intricate: God led his People by the right (or a straight) way, saith the Psalmist; but very crooked and winding, according to the stations set down by Moses. The cloudy Pillar gives them many a weary turn, to chastise their crooked hearts. Their Journey takes them up forty years, which might have been dispatched in fewer days. Were the World so good as its Admirers esteem, St. Peter should not have been in such want of it, as to say, *silver and gold have I none* (h). Nor would the Devil ever made that offer, *all these things will I give thee* (i). Afflictions are Federal Dispensations; not so much threatn'd, as promis'd to Christ's Seed (k), reckon'd a special privilege (l), and sanctif'd, better than removed. There's nothing so beneficial as Afflictions, if we do not frustrate their Efficacy, by the irregular managery of our selves under them. There's not a

(g) Jer. 24.5. (h) Acts 3.6. (i) Mat. 4.9. (k) Ps. 89. 22. and 119. 75. Heb. 12.6. &c. (l) Ps. 94.12 Acts 9. 15, 16. Phil. 1.29.

trouble we meet with, we can be without, but hath its place and work in that frame and design God hath ordained, to bring us to Glory. It had been far worse with us, if they had not befallen us: The sufferings of God's Servants are also but *for a very little while* (m); limited, to *ten days* (n), to *three days* (o), to *one day* (p), to *a night* (q), to *an hour* (r), to *a moment* (s), to *a small moment* (t).

Had I been *Rich*, I might have been Covetous, Prodigal, Luxurious: If *Honourable*, Proud, Tyrannical, Ambitious: If in *Health*, Soft, Effeminate, Dainty, Sensual. Had he not by some Affliction prevented me, or caused me to retreat, I had run too far in the prosecution of secular pleasures or profits; or, he lays it on me, to try the strength and vigour of my mind: To call forth, and exercise Patience, Fortitude, Trust and Confidence in him; my Fidelity and Loyalty to him. To make me more circumspect, not only free from notorious faults, but more perfectly vertuous, and good: To

(m) Isa. 53. 9. (n) Rev. 2. 10. (o) Hos. 6. 2. (p) Za. 3. 9. (q) Psal 30. 5. (r) Rev. 3. 10. (s) 2 Cor. 4. 17. (t) Isa. 54. 7.

commend,

commend, set off, and sweeten my future good things; to make the relish of them more pleasant to me. It's not fit, not safe for *Comforts*, to go without their *Attendant*, Affliction.

I will henceforth set no other price on things, than as they relate to my *true End*, and *Interest*. Let me be always under the care and skill, the wholesome Discipline of such a Tutor and Physician, my mind shall keep even pace with thee: Nor shall *thy will*, be ever different from *my free choice*. Answer the necessity of my *Health*, not the importunity of my *Appetite*. Take my *Soul's* part, against my *Enemies*; not *theirs*, against my *Soul*. Give me Poverty and Sicknes, rather, than not Grace to use Riches and Health: If I want them, thou requirest not, what thou givest not; if I have them, and want the use, thy Mercy proves my Judgment. Let Affliction be my Portion; to Contentment, Love to thee, Acquiescence in thy Will, fortitude of Mind, and universal Amendment, be the Use and Interest; eternal Felicity will then be the Issue, Event, and Purchase.

*Encouragement from the Providence of
G O D.*

CONSIDER the *Providence of God*, the continual exercise of his Wisdom, Power and Goodness, whereby he observes, supports, and governs all Creatures, Actions, and Events, with their particular Circumstances, in such a way as is most suitable to their Natures; *immediately*, to their proper ends; *remotely*, to the Order and Ornament of the Universe; *especially*, to the good of his Elect; *ultimately*, to his own Glory. He makes not the *World* by his Power, and then cares not, whether it stand or fall. He imploy'd not infinite Wisdom to build an House, and then sent Chance and Folly to dwell in it? He that made it, inhabits and governs it: Is as much concern'd to conserve, as create. That which was worthy making, is worthy preserving. He would not imploy infinite Wisdom and Power to create that, which he would afterwards disregard. He cannot but see every thing, being every where present, at hand. 'Tis no diver-

diversion, no trouble to him, to govern and rule all he sees. There is need of him in all places, and over all things. He is no where without an Interest, or without Business. He is Owner everywhere, in the possession of what he hath made, and engages himself in his own Possession. He cannot desert his own handy-work. The common Father of all the World, must then be concern'd in the Lives, Actions, and Affairs of his Children. As God hath given good Men power to do Miracles, to save the World; so, he hath done Miracles, himself, to save them. In Divine, and Humane Records, are Instances not a few, how his Providence hath regarded them, interposed for them, marked them for safety (*u*) made a difference between them and others. God had so great a regard for a good Man in an evil World, that he took him out of it unto himself by a rare and miraculous Translation (*w*). The Windows of Heaven could not drown the *World*, though very wicked, before *Noah* had made an Ark, though that was an hundred and twenty years in making (*x*). Nor the

(*u*) Ex. 12. 7, 13. Ez. 9. 4. Rev. 7. 3. (*w*) Gen. 5. 24. (*x*) Gen. 6. 8, &c.

Angel

Angel destroy *Sodom*, until *Lot* was set out of the skirts of that Destruction (*y*). Hence the *Apostle* observes, *The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation* (*z*). They are his peculiar people ; his particular charge. He makes more account of them, than of all the World. He keeps them above all ; nay, he keeps all for their sake : He preserv'd the *Ark*, for *Noah's* sake ; *Gosben*, for *Israel's* sake ; all that were in the *Ship*, for *St. Paul's* sake. He supports all Kingdoms and States, yea, Heaven and Earth for the Church's sake. For he keeps the Heavens, for the Earth ; the Earth, for living Creatures ; living Creatures, for Man ; *Man*, for *Israel* ; *Israel* for the *Elect's* sake. And, as soon as Grace hath finished her work ; and the whole number of the *Elect* is accomplish'd ; Nature shall utterly cease, and this World give place to a better. According to the singular degrees of Love, are his peculiar intentions of care and fore-cast, help, and assistance. *Providence* is *special*, where *Love* is *singular*. He holds such a watchful eye of *Providence* over every one of

(*y*) Gen. 19. 20. (*z*) 2 Pet. 2. 9.

his

his People, as if he tended him only ; yet takes such a special care of all in general , as of every one in particular. With a *particular Providence* he watches, not only over *every particular Person*, but over *every several Concern* of *that Person*. Their wonderful safety, their *great Enemy* owns ; He acknowledges a *threefold fence about them*, that hinders him, and all evil from reaching them, or theirs : *Hast not thou set an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath, on every side (a) ?* Dost thou not protect him, his *Family*, and *all that is his*, from all manner of Evil, by thy every-where present Providence, and Almighty Power ? Not leaving the least gap or breach for any annoyance to come in unto him ? In all the Motions and Commotions of the World, he forgets not them ; still, *it shall be well with them* ? No evil shall come nigh them : Nothing shall hurt them : All things shall work good unto them : All is for *their good* ; and he thinks nothing *too good* for *them*. Nothing shall befall them without his knowledge of it, and his being concerned for it. He de-

(a) Job 1. 10.

termines the bounds of their Habitations (*b*), upholds him, ordereth his steps, delighteth in his way (*c*), suffereth not his Soul to famish (*d*), preserves his going out, and coming in; watches over him; sets a watch over him; is on his right hand, and round about him (*e*). He is with him in the Fire, in the Water (*f*), in Trouble (*g*), in the Valley of the shadow of Death (*h*), covers them with his Feathers, and under his Wings (*i*), careth for them, is mindful, tender, careful of them, affectionate towards them, provides for them; defends them, values them as his Portion, the lot of his Inheritance, his Treasure, his Jewels, his Flock, his Servants, his Friends, his Children, his Spouse, his Beloved, the Apple of his Eye. He is not ashamed to be call'd their God, and Christ is not ashamed to call them Brethren. Here they are all *Kings in disguise*, and never without their *Life-guard* attending them where-ever they go. *He gives his Angels charge over them, to keep them in all their*

(*b*) Acts 17.26. (*c*) Psal. 37. 17, 23. (*d*) Prov. 10.3. (*e*) Psal. 121. 3, &c. and 125. 2. (*f*) Isa. 43. 1,2. (*g*) Psal.46.1. (*h*) Psal.23.4. (*i*) Psal.91.4.

ways (*k*), until they have finish'd their course of Service and Suffering : And then to bring them to himself, to their Crowns, and to set them upon their Thrones. We find (*l*) *many Angels* at this Imployment, carrying happy (seemingly forlorn) *Lazarus*, into *Abraham's Bosom*; as if they had been ambitious to bear him, every one striving which should carry a Limb.

Take therefore no thought for your lives (*m*).] Use all lawful endeavours after, prudently manage present enjoyments, and leave the rest to God. Undertake all with a quiet mind; resigned to his disposal, without doubtful, fearful, anxious thoughts about future things; *Saying, what shall we eat? Or, what shall we drink? Or, wherewithal shall we be clothed?*] Which way shall I support my Family? How shall I fill these empty Bellies? How shall I cover so many naked Backs? Will the finger of Providence toil or spin for me? Shall I be fed with a Raven's-bill? Will the Clouds drop down Manna unto me? Alas, I find my charges increase, and my Estate diminish: Large Payments, and

(*k*) Psa. 91. 11, (*l*) Luke 16. 22. (*m*) Mat. 6. 25, &c.

slender Incomes ; less than a *Miracle* cannot retrieve me ; and the time of *Miracles* is now past : I, or mine, must perish through contemned Poverty. Why, be not wanting in *thy Duty*, and he will not be wanting in *his Providence*. Do not forfeit his Goodness, Bounty, and Protection ; and he will not fail exercising them towards thee. Expect all your supplies from him : Who cloaths the Lillies of the Field ? Who imps the Sparrows Wings ? Who feeds the young Ravens ? Who preserveth Man, and Beast ? Whose tender Mercies are over all his Works ? [*Is not the life more (excellent, more valuable) than meat ? And the body than raiment ?*] Will he, that granted us a Being, deny the preservation of it, so long as he hath appointed it ? Suffer such a stately Structure to fall to decay, for want of repair, and support ? Lose that which is of so great a value, for want of food and raiment, so little in comparison of life ? 'Tis a greater thing to *make*, than *maintain us* ; to bring us out of nothing, than to supply us, when we have nothing ; to cloath us with flesh and skin, than with a garment ; to make a mouth, than to

find meat for it. 'Tis so much more easie to give food, than life; and raiment, than the Body; that he, who was so kind, so able to do the one, is not unable, will not be backward, cannot be so cruel, but to do the other. He made nothing casual, or to forsake it. His being a Creator obliges him to be careful of, to provide for his Creatures. They are all his *Pensioners*, have their meat at his great Ordinary. If he *kept it not open*, the whole World would instantly feel an universal Famine. He is no needy Householder, nor takes more into his Family, than he hath means to maintain: None in it are neglected by him: The little Ant, the creeping Worm, receive their Alms at his hand. He never gave life, but allowed conveniences for it. He that gives mouths, will give meat. He had never made us understand the way of living, but that he intended to bless, and succeed our endeavours. His first care in forming us, is an Argument of his future Providence over us.

Behold the Fowls of the Air] Consider seriously how they are fed; of all Creatures, they seem to take least care for
their

their food. Many of them spend their whole lives, as it were, in singing, without thought where to get their next meal: You might be as chearful, and be fed. Were it not better to be *without Reason*, than to make use of it, only for our vexation? To be incapable of thinking of God, as Beasts and Fowls are, than to think on him, only to distrust him, and murmur against him? We feed *Domestic Fowls* about the House, but who feeds those that fly in the Firmament? That, making no Provision in Summer, should in all likelihood starve in the Winter: Yet are then fattest, and thrive more than those nurs'd by Man's care. They have no *Repositories*, yet never want; nor *Granaries*, yet have store. They neither *Sow* nor *Reap*; yet eat, and drink, and sleep quietly at night; know not where to feed next; yet go out, and find a Table furnish'd for them by their Creator, and your heavenly Father. Will he that hath made such plentiful provision for the necessary sustenance, convenience, and defence, relief, delight, and satisfaction of all Creatures, neglect his Off-spring? shall he satisfie every living Thing, and not his own Chil-

dren; who may look upon all Creatures as the Goods of their Father's House, feeding, and providing for them, [*Are not ye better*] much better [*than they?*] Every one of you, than all they? One Heir, than all other Attendance? One Jewel, than all the common Vessels of the House? If he eyes, and regards every Sparrow; Birds of so little account, that one cannot be valued; there's no Money so small, but is a price too great for it, *Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings* (n)? Be confident, he hath a singular Care, a far more intimate Affection for you, who cost him so dear, One Sparrow is not worth half a farthing; and there's no Man shall suffer half a farthings-worth of harm, more than he orders. *Not one of them is forgotten before God*, much more, not any part of you, *but even the very hairs of your head are* (inter numerata) *all numbred*; much more the days of your lives; and the sufferings of those days. If he looks to all my hairs, much more to my provision, and safety, the Members of my Body, the great moments of my Life and

(n) Luke 12. 6.

Death.

Death. If we have security, for that, of which we keep no account, cut off, and cast away (*pili non facio, ne pilo quidem melius* :) If every one, be not only known to him, but so kept, as it were by Tale, that his Enemies cannot pull off *one*, without his permission; but, for it he calls them to a Reckoning: How much more security have we of our essential parts, and that, without which, we cannot live?

Which of you by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature?] flint, or statute measure of Estate? Without him, all our thoughtfulness is as vain, as it a Dwarf should thereby think to acquire a tall Man's stature. The most griping Worldling puts not up one penny, without a Ticket sign'd by his hand, to fetch it out of his publick *Exchequer*, whose is the earth, and the fulness thereof. If he *shut up that*, all Creatures break, and become Bankrupts. Turmoiling Musings, are additions to our Fears; never further, often hinder our desires. He may justly curse our present, who distrust him for future Mercies, and will not be satisfi'd with the Fidelity of his Providence. All

the Joys in this World, cannot take one gray hair out of our heads; but there needs only disturbance of mind, to make us hoary before our time. *Bion* seeing a Prince weeping, and tearing his hair for sorrow, asked him, *If Baldness would cure his Grief.* A little that a righteous Man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked (o), because that little, is God's Allowance.

And why take you thought for rayment? consider the Lillies of the field how they grow.] Without the Gardiner's Care and Industry, they neither do the work of the Man, in toiling without, nor of the Woman, in spinning within doors; contribute nothing to their beautiful Cloathing: [*And yet, I say unto you, that even Solomon*] (the Wisest, Richest of Princes) [*in all his glory*] and Magnificence, [*was not arrayed like one of them.*] The natural Bravery of the Lilly, coming from its own fruitful Bowels, is (as a beautiful, to a painted face) beyond all the Glory of Apparel, that Art and Cost could bring unto him. All the Lillies of the Field, are so deck'd and cloath'd, as is

(o) Psal. 37. 16.

not on one *Solomon*, in all his *Glory*. He puts more *Glory* every day, on one *Flower*, than *Skill* and *Wealth* can on the greatest *Monarch*, in his greatest *Splendor*. His providential goodness extended to the *Flowers* of the *Field*, is beyond all that *Man* can do, by the utmost extent of his *Wisdom*, *Power*, and *Riches*.

Wherefore, if God so curiously *Cloath*, not only [the] delightful *Flowers* of the *Garden*, but [*grass* of the *field*,] we tread on, of so little account, so short continuance, [*Which to day is, and to morrow cast into the Oven, shall he not much more cloath you?*] Of a more excellent *Rank*, and *Order*, *Frame*, and *Structure*, *Appointment*, and *End*? Your *Lives*, more valuable? Your *Bodies*, more wonderful? Your *Souls*, more durable? Your *Work*, more excellent? Your *final Estate*, more considerable than theirs? Will he, that so plentifully feeds the *Sparrows*, that have no *Granaries*; so gorgeously cloath the *Lillies*, that have no *Distaff*; make so rich, so glorious provision, for such short-liv'd *Creatures*; starve those, that rationally serve, that shall eternally enjoy him? His *Providence* regards the

lowest part of the Creation; *Fowls*, and *Lillies*, as well as the Conduct of *States*, and *Empires*. He remembred not only *Noah*, but *every living thing*, and *all the Cattle that was with him in the Ark* (p). He giveth to the *Beast* (q). He provideth for the *Raven* his *food*, when his young ones cry unto God (r). *The young Lions seek* (and find) *their meat from God*. The several Kingdoms of the World are thy *little Families* (most bountiful Creator) and thou comprehendest in thy fatherly care, all things which thou hast made. *The eyes of all wait upon thee, that thou mightest give them their meat in due season. What thou givest them, they gather, thou openest thy hand and satisfi'st the desires of every living thing* (s). Now, for us, who have such expresse promises added to such instances of his Providence; who takes more care for us, than for other Creatures (t); to doubt of sufficiency (if not Riches,) argues infidelity and diffidence in him to admiration, *O ye of little faith!*

The fear of Want, is for want of o-

(p) Gen.8.1. (q) Psal. 147.9. (r) Job 38 41. (s) Psal. 104.21 27,28. and 145, 15. (t) 1 Cor.9.9.

beying his Command, [*Take therefore no thought for the morrow.*] Be not anxiously solicitous for future necessities, [*Saying, what shall we eat? Or, what shall we drink? &c.*] 'Tis your shame to imitate those you abhor as Infidels; and not to differ in Practice, as you do in Profession from them. [*For after all these things do the Gentiles seek.*] As if themselves, not God, were to provide for them. This studious, earnest, busie Inquiry, is more befitting *Heathens*, who have no lively apprehension of God, his Providence, Fatherly Care, and Love; than you, who acknowledge and experience them. 'Tis for poor *Orphans* to carck, and care, to shift as well as they can, for themselves: But with you, the case is quite otherwise, [*For your heavenly Father knows you have need of all these (necessary) things.*] What he first gave, and is still needful for you: That *Life* and the *Body*, cannot subsist without *Food* and *Raiment*. 'Tis enough for a *Father* that he knows his *Childrens* wants, and his reproach, to neglect them. He will be sure to supply those wants, which are of his own-making; you may as well que-

sion, whether he *knows*, as whether he will *supply*. He made us *so needy*, not because he was niggardly, but bountiful : Not because he was not good, but would be always so to us : Not that we should be poor, and want these things, but humble, and always go to him, and have them : Not to make us miserable, but that we should still remember him, crave, and expect supplies from him, depend upon him, and not be able to live without him. We cannot put upon him a greater wrong, than the *Alienation* of our *Trust*, which he challenges as his peculiar : If plac'd on any *Creature*, we *Deifie it* ; we take upon us what is proper to him ; and 'tis no less a fault and folly, to invade God's part, than to neglect our own. O let my care be, to depend on thee, as thine is to provide for me, and I can not want.

But seek ye first (before, and above all) *the Kingdom of God*, (as the end,) *and his Righteousness* (as the way,) *and all these necessary things, shall be added unto you.*] Let your principal Care be to approve your selves my obedient, dependent Children, and you are secur'd of *Maintenance*.

tenance, in your *Minority*, as well as of your *Inheritance*, when you come to *Age*. There is *Bread*, as well as *Grace*; and *Cloathing* as well as *Righteousness* in the promise; *Godliness* hath the promise of the *Life* that now is, as well as of that which is to come (*u*): As certain, concerning *Food* and *Raiment*, as *Remission of sins*, and *Eternal Life*. *Trust in the Lord, and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the Land, and verily, thou shalt be fed* (*w*). If he give grace and glory, he will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly. (*x*). Be our heart honest, our hand diligent, our desires moderate, our souls believing, and we shall not fail of a supply of the needs of our *Bodies*, which are the just measure of our wants. Take upon you the care of duty, and leave all others to him. Such as discard themselves from his Family, have little reason to expect the Provisions of it. But he will surely mind our good, if we faithfully discharge our duty. We shall find him answering us, in what we look for from him, in doing what he expects from us. Can we have so mean thoughts.

(*u*), 1 Tim. 4.8. (*w*) Psal. 37.3. (*x*) Psal. 84.11.

of him, as to think, we should intend his glory, and not he much more intend our good? That he should neglect us, doing the things that are pleasing in his sight? It is distrust in him, to be troubled for what is future; Impatience against him, to be troubled for what is past, or present. This temper of Spirit disbelieves his *Wisdom, Goodness, Power, and Faithfulness*; which are all engaged for our provision, and security in his way.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of it self.] Rest satisfied with your present allowance; and be not solicitous for the future; or fearful of Evils, when you feel none. Impossibles, concern not our desires; nor Unavoidables, our fears; nor things past remedy, our vexing sorrow. Desire not what thou canst not attain; nor fear, what thou canst not prevent. Use the remembrance of past things, as instructive experiments, not renewers of thy Torment. There's nothing we can suffer from without, worth one minutes disquiet, of so noble a thing as the Soul, which then comes nearest its

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Original, the nearer it comes to Immortality. Reliance on God saves us from much sin, and misery: Whilst distrustful thoughts devour our Peace, and leave us nothing in the room, but fear, grief, and discontent. All solicitous looking beyond the present, takes off so much from our present Content: Imaginary Evils operate as if real, and produce substantial griefs. Ignorance of future miseries is a privilege, when knowledge is ineffectual to prevent them. That Providence that brings in the day, shall also bring new Events to comfort us under all the Evils of it. Let not the *present* have the charge and burthen of the *future* also. Make your troubles as few, as small, as short as may be: Every days incumbrance, is, pain enough for all our Patience, Care enough for all our Prudence, Labour enough for all our Diligence; [*Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.*] Why then by Impatience, and distrustful forethoughts, fruitless griefs for past, present, and projecting future Evils, do we anticipate, encrease and lengthen them? Living in misery now, for fear we should, hereafter? Spending the night allowed for

for rest, with irksome apprehensions of the next days task, worse than the task and burthen it self? Why are we so cruel to our selves, so ungrateful to God, that, every suggestion of a possible danger or miscarriage, should rob him, and our selves too, and create us more trouble, than all our present comforts, peace and thankfulness? A Cloud no bigger than a Mans hand, darken the whole face of Heaven it self? hinder the light of Reason, the prospect of Faith, the sight of God and all his Mercies: While we live at such a rate, where is our *Reason*? Quietly to enjoy the present good, while we disquiet our selves about those Evils, that are not, or may never be, or turn to our great advantage? Where is that *Faith* that should support us under the very greatest pressures, while we distrust God, in our present ease, and plenty? Where is our *Joy*, in, and *Thankfulness* to him, for all his favours through our whole Lives, while our impatient hopes, groundless fears, and jealousies of our own fancies, extinguish the sense of his goodness; and make us as unworthy to him, as burthensome to our selves? We can no ways more
honour

honour God, or ease our selves, than by committing all our Affairs unto him, and minding our Duty, without troubling our thoughts about future Events. How easie then, how comfortable would our Lives be? So lives the Child in his Father's House; so sleeps the Infant in its Mother's Arms; so live the Saints and Angels of God; this is the Life that is liv'd in Heaven; without Care, or Fear, Distrust, Perplexity, or Anxiety, under this assurance, That God will be the same to all Eternity, which he is at present to them.

*Encouragement by Considering GOD, as
Our Father.*

A Young Man being at Sea in a dreadful Storm, when all the Passengers were at their Wits-ends, he only was Chearful: Being ask'd the *Reason* of his Mirth, answered, that [*The Pilot of the Ship was his Father, and he knew his Father would have a care of him.*] Though the *Ship* of the Church and State be in a sinking condition, look we to our *Station*, our *Pilot* (God and our Father) will have

a care of us, and it. While we consider in whose hands, the Government of the World is, though Heaven and Earth come together, a gracious Heart and solid Quiet, will not, cannot be far asunder. He hath a greater venture of glory in the Church's welfare, than Men can have; and is fighting for, while he seems to fight against his People: Answering their Prayers, whilst he seems to reject them. However it goes with the World, with the Wicked, *it shall be well with the righteous* (y). He puts a difference (in publick Calamities) between those that serve him, and they that serve him not. *They shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day, when I make up my Jewels, and I will spare them, as a Man spareth his own Son that serveth him* (z). In a raging Fire, or devouring over-flowing Calamity. [Propriety] alone is a ground of [Care]; a Man would willingly save, and secure that which is his [own], and of any use unto him: But, if you add unto this [preciousness], that encreases the Care: But of all Jewels, those which come out of our Bowels, are more preci-

(y) Isa. 3. 10. (z) Mal. 3. 17.

ous,

ous, than those which adorn us : [Relation] works not only upon the Affection, but Bowels (a). And as [Jewels] add an excellency, to the word [mine], so doth [Service] to the word [Son]. A Man hath much conflict in himself, to take off his heart from an *undutiful Son* (b). But if any Child be *more* a *Jewel* than another, certainly 'tis a [dutiful] Child ; he hath a special Interest in his Father's Eye, and Ear, Hand, Heart, and Inheritance ; not only by Nature, but Obedience. *Propriety*, they are *mine* : *Preciousness*, they are *Jewels*, (Treasures, Ornaments unto me :) *Relation*, they are *Sons* : *Usefulness*, they are *Sons* that *serve me* : *All* sufficient grounds of Care, and Protection in the midst of Danger. So that, wheresoever we are, we have nothing to do, but to believe, obey, and rejoyce that we are *in the hands of a Father* ; (in better hands we cannot be) ; *his charge*, to whose *Care* we have left our selves, and the ordering of all our Concerns : Who stands intrusted with us : Who is always faithful to those he takes into his Care : Who hath stigmatiz'd care-

(a) Jer. 31. 20. (b) 2 Sam. 18. 5, 29, 33.

less improvident Parents with the name of *worse than Infidels* (c). And implanted in every Creature, not only principles of *self-preservation*, but *natural affection*, (even in those of a natural devouring fierceness) *towards their Off-spring*; so that, no Man, Wolf, Lyon ever hated his own flesh; but loved it, and cherished it. And will God suffer himself to be out-done, by the Kindness, Bounty, and Compassion of his own Creatures? *Can a Woman forget her sucking Child, that she should not have compassion on the Son of her Womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee* (d). The provident care of my heavenly Father, forbids the care of Diffidence in him, and requires the care of Diligence in my self: To interest my Judgment in the choice and use of means, but to keep my Affections disinterested, unconcern'd in the Event: To serve, but not misdoubt *his Providence*, while I imploy *my own*. That which is not within my power, should be out of my care. An obedient Child concerns not himself how he should have another Sute of Cloaths, or to morrow-

(c) 1 Tim. 5. 8. (d) Isa. 49. 15.

meals-meat : He eats that Meat ; wears those Cloaths ; is satisfi'd, with that Lodging and Provision, his Father provides for him. But, how can I call him *Father*, and prefer my low, and sordid Cares, before his Providence ; as if he were *such a Father*, as took no care for his Children. Solicitousness about the issue of my lawful Endeavours, derogates from him, as if he would not, could not, knew not how to help me. My Soul, disclaim God for thy Father, or rest contented with, and confident of his Fatherly Care, and Kindness, Provision and Protection. To whom shall I run in my Extremity ? Of whom shall I crave Pardon, and Provision, Succour and Relief ? But of *my Father*, that Ocean of Goodness, which hath overflow'd the whole Creation ; that tires and lins the Flowers of the Field ; neglects not any thing ; provides for every thing he hath made ; spreads a Table in the Wilderness, for the Beasts and Birds of Prey ; keeps open House for all his Creatures. But his faithful, Household Servants, are more especially under his Eye, his Care, his Providence ; shall have given them meat in due season. Nor
matters.

matters it *which way*; whether *Flesh* be brought in a *Ravens Bill*; or an *Angel Bake* our *Bread* with *Juniper Coals*; or our *own Industry*; or an unexpected *Friend*, or a *Customer*, from far, help us with it. Whatsoever *Hand* presents our Mercies, or whatsoever *Heart* was inclin'd to hand it, all flows from the *grand Original*. Every Mercy is the product of *Divine Love*, though second causes intervene; for those very causes have their creation, motion, direction and success from him. He that turns the *Hearts* of *Kings*, as the *Rivers* of *Waters*, turns also all the *little Rivulets* in the *World* into what scorched parched ground he pleases. Sacred Story derives from Heaven the kindness of *Abimelech* to *Abraham*, of *Laban* and *Esau* to *Jacob*, of *Ruth* to *Nahomi*, of *Boas* to *Ruth*, of *Jonathan* to *David*, &c. When *others* shew kindness to us, let's consider the motions of *Hearts* are sometimes infused, but always conducted by him. It may be of good use, what *Hobson* the late noted *Carrier* of *Cambridge* said to a young *Student*, receiving a Letter of the sad Tidings of his *Uncle's Death* (who maintain'd him at the *University*)

versity) weeping bitterly, and reciting the cause of his grief, he reply'd, *Who gave you that Friend?* Which saying, was no small refreshment, support, and comfort to him then, and afterwards in his *Ministry*. So Mr. Carter greatly comforted one, (who making his moan to him, that he had lost the greatest Friend he had in the World, having in a manner all his Livelyhood by him) by saying, *When the Fountain is dryed up in one place, God will open it in another.* Mr. Dod intending to marry, was full of fear, and care how he should be able to live; his Income being so small, as only maintain'd him in his single state: Looking out at a Window, and seeing a *Hen* scraping for her numerous *Brood* about her, thought thus with himself, *This Hen but liv'd before she had these Chickens, and she doth so now, with all these: I see the Fowls neither Sow, nor Reap, nor gather into Barns, yet my Father feedeth them. He that feeds the Ravens, will not starve the Hens,* said Mr. Heiron on his Death-bed, to his distressed Wife, for her many Children. And Luther, leaving the World, *Lord,* (saith he) *here are thy Children, thou lent'st them*

them me, and I resign them back again to thee: While I look'd upon them as mine, I endeavour'd to provide for them; thy Bow-
 els are infinitely above, what mine are. It's vile Ingratitude to despise a Present of God's preparing, and sending, so curious a Piece of his Workmanship: To rejoyce when our Cattel multiply, and to murmur when our Children increase. It's heathenish distrustfulness, to fear, that he that hath provided Children for us, will not provide Necessaries for them. God often provides better for the poor Child, than for the repining Parent: The sinfully solicitous *Israelites*, who in the Wilderness concluded, they and their Children should be starv'd for want of Food, were themselves destroy'd for want of Faith; their Children mean while being reserv'd for a Land flowing with Milk and Honey.

If in my Father's House be Bread enough, and to spare, for hired Servants, much more for his *Sons*, who did not forget to be a *Father*, when we had forgotten to be *Children*; but gave his own Son to dye, that his adopted Sons (who were Children of the Devil) should live.

And,

And, how is it possible he should not compleat that Gift, by bestowing all other things that are profitable for us; and either present pressures, or deliverances from them, as he sees them most for our real advantage: *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things (e)?* We have no cause to fear that God will not give us whatsoever is profitable for us, seeing he hath not spared his own Son to save us. We may well be confident in his Fatherly Love and Compassion towards us; as his Children, who in Christ is become our Father, and gives us both the *priviledge (f)* and *spirit of Sons (g)*, whose love towards us, is so much greater than that of earthly Parents towards their Children, as his goodness and mercy is greater; *If you then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your Children; how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven, give good things to them that ask him (h).* *Tam pater, tam pius nemo!* Our very mould and frailty, he makes a

(e) Rom. 8. 32. (f) Joh. 1. 12. (g) Gal. 4. 6. Mat. 7. 11.

sufficient argument to compassionate and relieve us; *Like as a father pitieth his Children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him: For he knoweth our frame, he remembreth that we are dust (i).* He is our *Father* when he strikes, corrects, seems to frown upon us, to carry it as our Enemy. He is too wise to manifest his love by outward tokens of distinction: Or, to give that Son he loves best, a gayer Coat than the rest of his Children. *He will do nothing but what he should,* said a wise Son, when told, his Father would disinherit him. My Father is greater, wiser, better than I; he is supream over me; hath the whole disposal of me; is tender and careful of me; full of love, pity, and compassion towards me: Knows better than I, what's best for me; and will make convenient provision for me. He's often more merciful to me in denying me what I ask, than he could be in granting. What *Father* can see *his Child* want Food when he hath it by him, unless he give him *Physick*, and then he must be kept to a *spare Diet*. I will trust his *Wisdom*, because he is *God*; and his *Love*, because he is my *Father*: So, I cannot

(i) *Psalm*. 103. 13, 14.

doubt, but that whatever he sends deserves my thanks, though I see not where in the benefit of it lies. A Cup of wormwood would not be reached to me by so wise, so good a Father, but that *his Love*, and *my Benefit* is mingled with it; coming from the Fountain of Love and Goodness, it hath a Blessing in it, though I cannot at present taste, or apprehend it. Though our Saviour knew his cruel Murderer's design was to execute, not his Father's Will, but their own Malice; he falls not foul upon them; he over-looks the Cup-bearer, to look upon him that sent it, *The Cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it (k)?* What Cup can be bitter, which his *Wisdom* provides, his *Goodness* sends, and consecrates to us: That hath the same Bowels of Mercy, Love, and Goodness to us in his Corrections, as in his Favours: He tempers our grief to our strength, not to our desert. Measures out the kind, weight, and continuance of our Afflictions. They are appointed, sent under the conduct, and never exceed the line and limits of his Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, who is

(k) John 18. 11.

the mighty Sovereign, and Governour of the World : The great Creator, constant Observer, wise Disposer, uncontroulable Over-ruler of all things. Who hath absolute power to do whatsoever he pleases ; is infinitely just, and will do what is righteous ; infinitely wise, and knows what is best to be done ; infinitely good in himself, and gracious to all that depend upon, and submit to him ; that nothing shall befall them, but what shall turn to their present and everlasting good ; making them best at least ; turning Poison into a Remedy ; cross and contrary Events, co-operating for our real advantage. Resignation of our Concerns to him, lays all querelous thoughts ; hushes all the whimperings of our minds in the hour of trouble. We never carve well for our selves, when we snuff at the portion cut out to us, by the hand of our heavenly Father. He that gave us so great a Blessing, as *Son-ship* when we were *Enemies*, will much more give us so (comparatively) small a Blessing as *Food*, now we are his *Sons*. Shall not he that saved our Souls from Death, deliver our Bodies from the dangers of this World ? His dealings

dealings with us, are all love, mercy and faithfulness. He gives all his Children, so much as he sees sufficient for them. In an especial manner, Grace to fear him, contented Spirits to submit to him, believing Hearts to depend upon him, his Blessing with all their enjoyments. He will preserve us *from Evil, or the Evil of it*; proportion, bless it to us; comfort, support us under it, and deliver us out of it. By him I am infallibly assur'd to be preserv'd, or reliev'd; freed or rescued from, or secured under Affliction. I shall receive deliverance from them, or enjoy under them satisfaction and tranquility of mind; patience, and contentedness with his good pleasure; submission, and resignation of my will to his; support and comfort under my weaknesses and despondences; such evidences, communications, and irradiations of his love, and favour, care, and kindness to me, as shall, not only recompence the want and loss of any outward comfort, but sweeten the presence of any outward troubles, make them inconsiderable unto me, in comparison of them, not to be parted with for the enjoyment of them.

When *Julius Cæsar* was at any time sad, upon the thoughts of any disaster that befel him, he was wont to say, *Cogitate esse Cæsarem, Think that thou art Cæsar*, and that put him into a more chearful temper. We could not be dismay'd, did we not forget our selves. *Why art thou, being the King's Son, lean from day to day? Wilt thou not tell me (1)?* Nothing can add to, or detract from an infinite good and happiness. Is not *he better to us* than Houses, or Lands, Friends, Riches, or Honours? He hath all things, that hath him who hath all things. When Christ is given (a right to) All is given. No matter for many things, so I have the one thing needful: To whom thou givest Honour, so I have a portion of thy Grace: In what place I am, so I discharge the duty of it. *Who can complain* of neglect, whom the King himself embraces, and delights to Honour? Of Sicknes, whose Sins are forgiven? Of Want, who hath an Interest in the Promises? Of Poverty, who hath an Inheritance in Heaven? Of Dishonour, who is the Son of God, who wants neither

(1) 2 Sam. 13. 4.

Wisdom to direct, nor Interest to oblige him to do what is best for him? General Invitations, and common Mercies, are for us as Men; but where thou givest Grace, thou comest close unto our Souls; and winnest us with dear and particular Intimations. If we are *thy Children*, we are richer than the World can make us, which the worst may have, and best want. Thou sufferest Infidelity to reign, to instruct thy Disciples: And abandonest the fairest part of the World, to them that persecute thee. There can be *no Poverty*, where we have *thee* for an *Inheritance*: He whom thou sufficest not, deserves to be perpetually poor. Give me but Grace to serve, and relie upon thee, and I ask no more. Shall I say that's too little, which infinite Love and Wisdom thinks enough? Or, disorderly hasten towards enlargement, instead of patiently waiting the Lord's leisure? Should he spread before me all this World's Treasure, and bid me take what I would, could I do more wisely, than put the choice to him again? And beseech *him* to *chuse* for *me*, who loves me better, and knows better what's best for me, than my self? And

shall I not now then, thankfully stand to his choice? We will henceforth be chearful, and contented in our present allotment. If every thing be *best*, which *he appoints*, why am I troubled, as if things went not well with me? It's impossible it should have been better with me than it is; it had not been well, if it had been otherwise. All things are ordered by his deliberate Counsel, and fore-knowledge, who grasps all my concerns, consults my universal good, is as exactly careful of me, as if he had none other to look after: And suffers no trouble to befall me, because he doth not regard; for his Care and Providence extends to every Creature; or, because he cannot or will not help, for he is equally infinite in all his Attributes; but because his Wisdom finds that Condition fittest for me. Had I more of the World, I might have less Grace. Though my Commons be short, it should certainly be otherwise, if he saw it better. If I have not what I desire, I have what I ought to desire.

Querilous wranglings, sullen discontents, disturb not my satisfaction and repose. I will *desire*, and *will*, just so, and

no other wise, than thou doest; O, Omniscent, Omnipresent; only wise God, and merciful Father, whose Goodness designs my Welfare, and whose Wisdom manages that design. I would rather have that be, which already is, than any thing else. That's better which thou wilt, than I. Thou consultest well and wisely about it: Know'st what use to make of thy Creatures; where most fit to bestow them; and wilt dispose me there, where most necessary, and best for me; and suffer no evil to befall me, unless for some greater good. I venture all with thee: I freely refer all to thee, in the particular disposition of my self, and mine. Grant me, not what I crave, but what thou knowest good to give me. Take from my punishment, or add to my patience. Lessen my Burden, or strengthen my Shoulders. All *Bestness* depends upon the *wisest Goodness*. I will repute nothing, which seems *good unto thee*: And more willingly consent to that thou wouldest have, than to my own inclination. Put me into what condition, use me as, lead me whither thou pleasest. Choose my Raiment and Provision for

me : Sicknes , or Health ; Respect , or Disgrace ; Plenty , or Poverty : I will , not only consent and submit unto , but make it my business to vindicate , and maintain , these thy dealings with me , to be , most fit and prudent , most futable , and advantagious for me .

Regulating our Desires and Opinions

SO uneasie and unquiet a thing is Man , not rais'd above this unconstant state ; that he suffers as many Servitudes , as the World hath Changes . Every alteration abroad , makes another at home : A Tide of swelling or sinking Affections within , at every ebb or flow of things without . His mind is in such perpetual agitation , till escaped out of the Whirl and Circuit of the Allurements and Affrightments of this World , that he finds no peaceable Corner in it . VVhilst , he that lives above it , looks down upon it in all its Glory with Triumph and Contempt , and with the Foot of Scorn , spurns it into Inconsiderableness ; stands upright in the midst of Ruins : Endures Torments ,
with

with greater Courage, than Persecutors threaten, or execute them: *Looses* all earthly Enjoyments with more cheerfulness, than others *enjoy* them: Neither desires, nor fears Changes: Is the same, whatsoever happens in his Fortunes, or Affairs: His Mind and Estate are Matches: Hath learn'd to bear all Injuries, Disappointments; and Difficulties, with an equal mind. *Qui desiderium suum clausit, cum Jove de felicitate contendit.* He is wise enough, who knows himself; great enough, who masters himself; rich enough, who enjoys himself; hath Pleasure enough, who pleases himself; happy enough, who lives well. 'Tis almost impossible he should be oppress'd with Sorrow, who serves God, for God's sake. Christianity teaching us to be Content in all Estates, teaches us to be happy; for, nothing from without can make us miserable, unless we join to it our own consent, and apprehend it such; and entertain it in our sad and melancholy Retirements; and comply not with all the Issues of Divine Providence. *Impatience* makes every Ague a Fever; and every Fever, a Calenture; and that Calenture,

may expire in Madness. But, a *quiet Spirit*, is a great disposition to Health; and for the present, alleviates, if not removes the Sickness. He that hath learn'd to terminate his desires, when his needs are served, and, to judge of his needs, by the proportion of Nature, hath nothing wanting towards Riches : He only wants that is not satisfi'd. *Joseph* and *Mary*, we may easily suppose, as poor, as Hunger; as forsaken, as Banishment; as disconsolate, as Strangers; yet, their present Lot gave them no Affliction, because fed with a necessary Hospitality; and their Desires were no larger than their Tables; their eyes look'd only upwards, and they were careless for the future, and careful of their duty; and so made their Lives pleasant, by the Measures and Discourses of Divine Philosophy.

Things below, have nothing of certainty, but the Miseries that attend them. The toil and labour, we undergo to attain them : The fear of losing them, after such troublesome Acquisition; the care we employ to secure them; the grief we resent, when they are taken from us; are

are not so much the Evidences of our Wants, as of their own Malignity. And, 'tis not easie to resolve, whether *Poverty*, with its Incommodities, be more supportable, or *Abundance*, with all its insuperable Torments. A Christian is a King in this World, without the load of a Scepter or Diadem. To him Poverty is not insupportable; but to them that think it so. The Imagination makes the greatest part of the Torment. Men must be ignorant of necessitous Contentments, to be afraid of their condition. If we frequented their Habitations, we should see there's nothing dreadful in them, but the name they bear: That Joy covers the Faces of most of their Guests: That they dispute Tranquility of mind with the rich; and that without being laden with the cares that disturb the Wealthy; they taste Life's sweetness with delight; and if they be forc'd to transplant, they leave their Cottages without Complaint: The very place others call Banishment, is the Country of the Inhabitants: They seek to get out; and not to carry away; and assure themselves to find every where sufficient to satisfy their needs.

needs. While the *Rich* are unhappy in the midst of Plenty and Pleasures. Calamities beset them on all sides : Their Treasures are their Troubles ; they get them with Labour ; possess them with Fear ; and lose them with Sorrow. *Seneca* esteem'd himself happy in his Exile ; the Penury that attended him, contributed to his quiet ; he thought he had lost his *Trouble*, not his *Goods*, when they spoiled him of his Wealth : And that, by a happy mischief he had recovered his Liberty, in being deprived of the care of preserving his Riches.

He hath most, that does not strive to add to his Estate, or Reputation, but to subtract from his desires. 'Tis more eligible to be without them, than to need them. He is the greatest *Monarch* that hath little and is satisfi'd ; not that thinks he hath not what he should, what others have, what he might have, or, that grieves there is no more to have. He that's always Craving, is never Contented. If we would spare to *desire*, we might spare to *have*. There are few Men so miserable, that may not find satisfaction in themselves, and their condition,

tion, because it is in a every Man's power to terminate his desires; whilst, by their disorders we are induc'd to value more, a future trouble or evil, than a present repose or good. He is not happy, who hath all he desires, but, who desires not, what he hath not. VVere there no other World, I would not be greedy after the great things of this, when 'tis far more easie to want them. Here would I indulge my self the sensuality of a contented mind; the luxury of an *Ataraxie*, of an indifferency as to all these things; of being quiet and untroubled by not having them; free from the hurry and disorder of them. He that hath once a competency, hath all the Contentment that's to be found in temporal things: And experience will tell him, after a sufficiency once attain'd, Contentment will encrease no more, though Riches encrease never so much. He can have no Enemy, who will be a Friend to all. Nothing is able to cross him, who is dispos'd to take every thing well.

Nothing is enough to fatisfie Lust, a *little* to fatisfie Nature, all the rest is but
matter

matter of *Opinion*. VVe pick our own Sorrows, out of others Joys: *Comparison*, more than *Reality*, makes us happy or miserable. Many never found themselves in want, till discovered the abundance of others: And could have lik'd their own Portion well enough, had they not seen another have something they liked better. They hunger, not because they are empty, but because others are full. Nay, the most inconsiderable thing acquires a value, by being anothers, whilst we despise much greater, being our own. Not *Necessity*, but *Ambition* and *Superfluity*, sets Mens hearts upon the rack. Had I all the World, I could enjoy no more, than to cloath and feed me; the rest could please me no otherwise, than by looking on; and I can thus solace my self while it is anothers: With the same mind, behold their Riches, and my own Poverty; and make as great a benefit of that, as they of their encrease: Whilst I am free from those black phantasms of Cares and Fears which leap on Down-Pillows, and pass through splendid Palaces, to find out those Pompous Lives, which have usual-
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ly but the Bark of Happiness. They that *seem* to live so *Happy*, do not so in themselves; but, by times and turns, have their Grievances and Discontents. Besides, those which are most happy, are most sensible; and, unless all things fall out to their liking, impatient of all Adversity. Every little cross overthrows them: So small are the occasions which take from the most Fortunate, the height of their Happiness. We find not Miseries so uneasie as we make them: While we not only endure the whole Affliction that troubles, but increase it by repining at the envied Condition of others; fancying we are more unhappy than we should be, were we allow'd to exchange that which troubles us, for any thing which doth not. Many of those we envie, as thinking them far less sufferers than our selves, look with envious Eyes on us, and do but dissemble their Grievances more handsomly than we, not find them more easie than ours. Every one is as miserable, or as happy as he esteems himself. If we have not what we would, 'tis but (at worst) being contented with what we have: A sure means of discharg-
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ing that Anxiety of mind, in respect of our Condition, or other Mens. If I possess not so great an Estate as many do, some of them perhaps (notwithstanding their abundance) enjoy less than I; as well as, there are more, who have not so much as either. We would willingly exchange *Fortunes* with many, but perhaps not be *any of those Men* on any account. There's something in every Estate, which without Experience is not known, and being experienc'd doth molest and trouble. We judge of our own Discontents, but know not how far they are exceeded in the same kind, in others. VVere every Mans troubles publicly known, few but would bear their own Burdens, rather than other Mens. VVould we look with as much Compassion on the Adversities of our Brethren, as we do with Envy on their Prosperities, we should find cause to sit down contentedly with our own Burden, and Comforts, that we bear but the proportionable share of our common Nature; except some extraordinary demerit of our own, hath added to the weight; and, in that Case, we have more reason to admire

mire our sufferings, are so few, than so many. There's nothing more *Disingenious*, more *Diabolical*, than, to think our selves more miserable, because another is happy : To create wants, from the envious Contemplation of other Mens Abundance : That cannot first be satisfi'd with an Inferiour degree of Happiness; and then, whet our *Impatience*, with other Mens *Enjoyments*, of what we cannot obtain. Whereas, we should make the Comforts of others; an allay, not an improvement of our own miseries. *True Charity* attracts the Concerns of our Brethren to our selves: And, he that hath that in his Breast, can never want Refreshment, whilst any about him are Happy; for, by adopting their Interests, he shares in their Joys. As our present Content, is in the power of our Resolutions; so, we have as much Command of the future : And, its but supposing the worst that we apprehend, or can happen to us, already come to pass. He easily bears adverse Fortunes, who always expects them. Foresee the worst Accident, and all things will fall out prosperously. He that thus prepares himself, needs not fear
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his Tranquility of mind, since he resolves to give it himself.

That which troubles, or gives us rest, is *in our selves*. If we be not quiet *there*, every thing without, will make us miserable; if we be, nothing can. If we be sick, and are afraid to die; in pain, and have no patience; scorn'd, and are proud; impoverisht, and are covetous; nothing can help us from being unhappy. But, if we fear not Death, so much as an ill Life; think Impatience, and Murmuring, a worse Disease than the Gout or Stone; *Pride* the highest disgrace; *Covetousness* the basest Beggery, the greatest Poverty: If we die not unwillingly, when we must die sooner than we would; lose not our Patience with our Health; nor our Constancy and Chearfulness, with our Estate; be not our own Enemy, when we have no Friend; vex not our selves, when others trouble us; be not solicitous for to morrow too, if we be ill to day, we can feel no harm by Death, or Sicknes, or Scorn, or Want.

Keep all well *within*, that no disorder put *that* out of order, and we are well. No Man can make another a Slave, that hath

hath not first enslav'd himself. Be not inthral'd to Honour, or Disgrace; Pleasure, or Pain; Hope, or Fear; Life or Death, and thou art free. Nothing can overcome him, that is not first overcome by his own Imaginations, and Passions, false Opinions, unreasonable Desires, fond Affections, ungrounded Expectations. A proud Man hath no God; an unpeaceable Man hath no Neighbour; a distrustful Man hath no Friend; but, a *discontented Man* hath not himself. Those Burdens that break a froward Man's Back, will not so much as break a silent Man's Sleep.

*At what soe're shall happen be not sad;
A like for all, that God dispenseth glad:
Wise Periander did through grief expire;
Because Events not joyn'd with his desire.*

The best way to be Rich, is not to encrease Possessions, but to lessen Desires. So, the Contented Man must needs be abundantly provided for: Being so intirely satisfi'd with what he hath, as to have no desires at all. VVhosoever would have this rare *Jewel of Contentment* (which turns

turns want into VVealth, all into Gold) must come (as they who seek the *Philosopher's Stone*) with Minds divested of all Ambitious, Covetous Desires, else they shall never find it. None are less Contented than the Rich; which shews, our Repinings proceed not, from any defect of Bounty in God, but from the malignant temper of our own Hearts. He's likeliest to find Contentment, who sits at Home, and duly contemplates those Blessings God hath brought within his own reach: Of which every Man that considers well, will find he hath a fair proportion: And think himself Blessed with what he hath, without being Careful for what he hath not. VVhile he that measures his Poverty, by his VVants; so much he wanteth, as he doth desire. If we set not bounds to our desires, we shall never be satisf'd: If we modestly confine them within the limits God hath set us, to the things we need, and he hath promis'd, (and what pretence have we to claim more, than our Charter gives us; the Covenant-Indenture goes no further than Food and Raiment (*m*). Every new ac-

(*m*) Mat. 6. 25, &c.

cession

cession he superadds, will appear (what it is) a Largess, and Bounty. Glory it self without us, will not make us Happy in Heaven. It can never be well with us, till *our own Souls* be a *Heaven* to us ; and *Blessedness*, be a *Domestick*, an homedwelling Inhabitant there : Till we have got a right temper of mind, a settled principle of Quietude in our own Breast, and become the Sons of Peace, with whom the peace of God may find Entertainment and Abode : Till we have that Treasure within us, that may render us insensible of any dependance on any foreign Good, or fear of foreign Evil. When *Archelaus* invited *Socrates* to his Court, for his Relief and Advancement, the Philosopher dismiss the Messenger with this Heroick Answer : *Tell the King, that a measure of Flour may be bought in Athens for a half-penny, and Water is to be had for nothing ; and though your Master supposes I want, yet I have enough, because I am content with a little.* *Marcus Curio*, when he had Bribes sent him, to tempt him to be Unfaithful to his Country, was sitting at Dinner with a Dish of Turnips ; *Well*, (saith he) *that Man that*

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can be Content with such Fare as I have, will not be tempted with your Rewards : I thank God, I am Content with this Fare ; and as for Rewards, let them be offered to those that cannot be content, as I, with a Dish of Turnips. He that can be satisfi'd with a hard Bed, and a bare Board, is shot-free from a Thousand Temptations, that prevail in others, to the disturbing, to the damning of their Souls. *Zeno*, once very Rich, hearing all his Goods were cast away in a Ship-wreck, *Fortune* (saith he, speaking in a Heathen dialect) *hath dealt well with me, and would have me now study Philosophy.* *Socrates*, when the State was oppress'd with a Thousand Miseries, always went abroad, and came home, with the same Looks ; neither more troubl'd, nor less chearful ; bearing a Mind smooth and serene on all occasions : Far remote from Grief, and above all Fear. When the City was besieg'd, and every one lamented his Condition, he was no more moved, than when it was Flourishing : Nothing ruffled or discomposed the even happy Frame of his Soul. He sought not anxiously how to acquire more means, but

to accommodate himself to what he had :
 VVherewith he was so contented, that
 he affirm'd himself to come nearest the
Gods, because he wanted least. One say-
 ing, *It was a great matter to abstain from*
what a Man desires ; but, *It's a greater*
 (answer'd he) *not to desire at all.* And
 added,

Care, if by Care ought may effected be,
If not ; Why carest thou, when God cares
(for thee.

Thrasea, the Martyr under *Nero*, was
 a Person of that Divine Presence and Dis-
 course, that his Friends were Confident,
 if they could have perswaded him to
 have stooped so far from the Contempt of
Death, as to plead for his Life, and make
 his defence, that he would have thun-
 der-struck the *Senate*; and *Nero* himself,
 who had no other cause of displeasure a-
 gainst him, but his going out of the *Se-
 nate*, as refusing to give his Vote for
 the Condemnation of *Agrippina*, upon
 the barbarous motion of her unnatural
 Son ; and his not appearing at the Fune-
 ral Solemnities, wherein Divine Honours
 were

were conferr'd upon *Poppea*. Through his Belief of the Souls Immortality (of which he was discoursing with *Demetrius* the Philosopher at that instant) he was of so well a compos'd Mind, that he did not so much as change Countenance (except to a more cheartful Aspect) at the news of his Condemnation. And while his Life was breathing out at the Veins of both his Arms, he spent not his breath in Effeminate Lamentations, but in Discourses upon that endless Life, to which he assur'd himself he was hastning: And call'd the *Questor*, who was sent to see his Execution; *Look here* (saith he) *young Man, we are pouring out this Offering (Jovi liberatori) to God Redeemer. I pray God divert the Omen, but verily thou livest in such Times, as its very be-hoveful to get thy Mind fortifi'd against all Temporal Evils, by such examples of Constancy, as thou seest me set before thee.* *Anaxarchus* the Philosopher, having sharply reprov'd *Nicoerean*, and being by him ordered to be beaten to Death with Iron Mallets, *Strike on, strike on,* (saith he) *thou may'st break in pieces this Vessel of Anaxarchus, but Anaxarchus him-*

himself thou canst not touch. Reproach not Religion, by yielding the day to *Pagan* Morality. Let not the Faith of Christians be out-done by the Heathen Infidelity. Be ambitious to tell the World in your Lives, a greater than *Marcus Curio*, than *Socrates*, than *Thrasea*, than *Anaxarchus* is here. God abridging good Men of this World's Goods, argues not, he envies their Happiness, but that it consists not in them. Whosoever understands the nature of *true Good*, must bid adieu to the hopes of it, in any thing but in God alone; and for those things most state felicity in, a good Man would judge himself unhappy, if he could not despise them. He that cannot want these things, without thinking himself miserable, at once reproaches his Maker, as if he had created him for nothing more worthy, and degrades himself, by intimating such gratifications are most suitable to him. Is *that* worthy our Esteem, that attends us for a *little while*, and leaves us *for ever*? Can that be our Happiness, which when we cease to be Mortal, ceases to be ours? *Faith* makes us judge of things as they are, not as they appear. This unbinds

the Charm, discovers the Illusion of whatsoever is admirable in the Eye of Sense: This unravels the doubts of the intangl'd Mind; corrects the Mistakes of the erring Eye; level's the greatest difficulties; clears all the objections against Providence; and makes an Afflicted State, not only tolerable, but so far amiable, as it promotes our supreme Happiness. *Contentment* teaches how to amend our Lives, instead of being weary of them: It makes the worst Condition here, easie and comfortable, by making the Mind quiet, patient, and thankful. Our prudent prevention of external Evils, patience under them, with our chearful, faithful, diligent Conversation, is a part of that Duty we owe to God; and are indeed the exercise of our Patience, and the Evidences of a Contented Mind: For, he that grows weary of the World, throws off all, and with *Jonah*, wishes to dye; its a sign he wants true *Contentment*, becaute that consists in a chearful and ready Compliance with the Will of God; and not in a froward preference of our own Will, or choice: *I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the World,*
but

but that thou shouldest keep them from the Evil (n). By running away from our Task, before the end of the day, we not only lose our promised Reward for bearing the Burden and heat of the day, but are justly obnoxious to be cast into Prison, for our Rebellion and Disobedience.

He that sets his Love upon that, which the more he loves, the more he enjoys, is sure to be free from Discontent; because he cannot want, he is sure to enjoy that which he loves: And though he be deprived of other things, he is not obnoxious to Impatience; because he is sure to retain that which he most values and affects; which will answer and supply lesser wants with a great Advantage. I have somewhat of the best things, I will thankfully enjoy them; and having Food and Raiment, take the rest as an overplus, or want them with Content. I never will'd not to be Poor; not to be destitute of Relations; not to suffer Sickness or Reproaches: Other things are the matter of my Choice, which no Man, no accident can forbid, or deprive me of.

(n) John 17. 15.

What should I fear, or be vexed at, who may always be, what I should? VVho need not be miserable, unless I will? What Cause have I to be displeas'd, who may always please God, and my self too? Men may make me *suffer*, but not *do evil*; kill, but not hurt me. I may be Poor, yet Just, and Content: Ill spoken of, but still I can do well. Preservation from *Sin*, is a greater Mercy, than exemption from *Suffering*. He that lies under the most acute Torment, may see another more sadly cruciated, if not in his Body, by the Agonies of his Mind; and there's no pain so small, but God hath a finger in it, though it be but the aching of the little finger. O Pain, in vain thou attemptest me, so long as I can honestly bear thee; and have so much Cause of Joy, for my healthful frame of Soul; that he hath cured me of my Lust, and Avarice, Pride, and Passion, Envy and Revenge; which disorder most Mens Minds, and are more formidable, pernicious Evils, than those that distemper their Bodies, and thrust them into *Hospitals*. How should that make me worse, which makes not my self worse? 'Tis not in my
power

power to change my condition, but it is in my power to attain to such a greatness of mind, as becomes a Man; whereby I may be lifted up above the hurt of outward Crosses. It may be in the power of others, to disturb my outward Condition; but it is in my own power, that they shall not disturb my Mind. False Accusations can no more destroy my Integrity, than a Prison exclude my Comfort. 'Tis not in my power to be handsom, or witty, always in health, or rich; but it is, to be Good or Virtuous; to have a healthful, beautiful Soul; to be rich in good works: To turn Sicknes, and Poverty, into Health, and Riches: To make a bad Case good; and Advantage, by Losses.

Danger is better than safety; a Storm, than a perpetual Calm, if before our Fears we were the World's, but after them God's. VVho is a loser? That parts with a Bosom-Companion, and dwells ever after in the Arms of God; and is inflamed with a greater love of Heavenly things? That loses a Friend, and gets God for his Father; a Relation that's far more intimate, endearing, and lasting? That, if he by his subordinate Instru-

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ments remove my Estate, secures me of Riches in Heaven, out of danger, above all accidents and disasters. All Bodily pains and diseases are tolerable and easie, to the pardoned, reconciled, and reformed: *The Inhabitants shall not say I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their Iniquity* (o). The most vehement Blasts of this World, shall never intercept the Beams of the Sun of Righteousness, the lifting-up the light of his Countenance upon me, which shall put gladness into my heart, more than in the time, that my Corn and Wine, my worldly Goods encreased. If he withdraw some Temporal Enjoyments, he will lessen my desires, or give in the more of himself. He can croud a great deal of Comfort, into a little of the Creature. Where the Possessions are low, he can heighten the Fruition; or himself be instead of them. Therefore hath taken upon himself the Names of all other Comforts; to intimate, that he is able to stand for all, they signifie, or are worth; *our Portion, Inheritance, Habitation, High Tower, Shield, Shadow, Refuge, Buckler,*

(o) Isa. 33. 24.

Horn

Horn of Salvation, Strength, Deliverer, Friend, Father, Husband, &c. Whatsoever Benefit or Helpfulness we meet with *in them*, is *in him* to be found in a more excellent manner. We have reason to thank the World if it loves us not; if it makes us place our Comfort and Content in God and a good Conscience. They are unkind, whom we have obliged; but we repent not, if we have done such ungrateful Persons good, and hereafter, place our hopes and expectations above. 'Tis they that injure me, not I, that ought to be troubled; except for their sin, not my own suffering. Let's not, when there is no fault in the Cause, make one in the Calamity; since, we ought rather to render *double praise*, for *our Afflictions*, and for *our Innocency*. When we are punish'd for our Crimes, we ought to have Patience; but when we suffer innocently, we may well add Gladness to it. Whatsoever is not pleasant, may be useful, so ought to be acceptable.

When I am unloaden of my Luggage, I am lighter for my Journey; that calls me away to my true Riches, where my

heart is already. It's but a *Moveable* that's removed; my *Inheritance* is incorruptible, undefiled, fadeth not away. A little Money serves the *Traveller* that hath but a little way to go. *Parum viæ, quid multum viatici?* It's no dishonour, or prejudice to a *Pilgrim*, to want that, which would be a Weight, a Burden, an Impediment. To him, not only, a little sufficeth, but much is troublesome. He's a *Stranger*, not only to his residence, but to himself; and is, rather where he is not, than where he is. Earth is not the place where I am to expect Glory, or Greatness; I shall have enough above, and here too, so I can keep within my self, and look upon other things with an indifferent eye. This is but my *Pilgrimage*, my passage, (not my Countrey, or place of rest) at most, my abode for a night; where I must expect bad usage, a troublesome, uneasy, uncomfortable passage; sicknesses, losses, affronts, disgraces, tempestuous Weather, rough Companions, that will turn me *out* of my way, or justle, bespatter, throw dirt upon me *in it*. This kind of usage or condition, is but according to the Law, the Custom of the place,
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the common Condition of things in it. I will not be solicitous for better Accommodations, where I must make so short a stay, and be gone: All will be amended when I come to my Journeys end, the place of my rest and happiness. Shall I leave off thoughts of going home, because I see some handsome Inns by the Way? Or another Road cross it: Be startled when I meet with one dissatisfaction, where I look for many? I doubt not to receive, what I can justly desire: I fear not to suffer the wrongs which I do not do. I am in no danger by reason of *him* who loves me as his Friend, and hath so secur'd the Interest of all those who have consigned themselves to his care, that they are *ever happy*, nothing can make them *miserable*. I am fully content with my particular allowance; the Countrey whether I am going, shall content me with the meanest Entertainment upon my *Road* unto it. I have no power to make it all plain; nor have bargain'd with God to make it so for me. I do not think there is any difficulty in the Divine Methods, because I understand them not: Nor appoint him a time to bestow those

Courtesies, which I do not absolutely pray, that I may receive. I do not desire that he should alter the course of his Providence, to accommodate my present condition. Neither will I think that any thing falls out amiss, though he permit that which I unjustly suffer from my Adversaries, not to be rectified *in this Life*; since I know it will, to my infinite advantage, be set in order in *another*. Since the general Rendevouze of all *Happiness*, is only there to be expected, where my Journey ends, my mind shall be always fix'd upon it; I will comfort my self all the way, with the thoughts of what I shall enjoy, when I come unto it. A *Traveller* reckons of Storms, and Tempests, ill Way, foul Weather, hard Entertainment, homely Fare, strange Usage: Is content with any thing, makes shift with every Inconvenience, minds not others Sayings, Doings, or Possessions, as he passes on; some are Chiding, others Dancing, others Plowing, others Building, &c. whilst he's not at leasure to think of any thing, but his *dear Countrey*. Sets not his heart on his *Inn*, which he must leave next Morn: Seeks not for
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Honours, or Offices in it. All his care is, how he may pass safe, and well, and quietly, he hath enough at home. Here we have Houses, as *Foxes* have Holes, and *Birds* of the Air have Nests, to be chas'd and driven from them at pleasure. *No continuing City, but we seek one to come.* And, who would not contentedly go through a Prison to a Palace? A Barren Wilderness, to a Land of Promise? *Endure the Cross, and despise the Shame, for the Joy set before us?* The days of mourning will be ere long over. *If our Cross be heavy, we have but a little way to carry it.* Nothing that hath an end, can make a Man truly happy, or miserable. This is but a step of ill way, a pleasant one is dearly bought with the loss of Home. 'Tis a very fallacious Inference in any, to argue unkindness in any temporal Want or Suffering, who hath a Title to an Eternal Inheritance and Reward. Were this Earth Hell; and the Men in it Devils; all the Sufferings we could undergo, were not worthy to be compared to our future Happiness. What car'd the *Proto-Martyr St. Stephen*, for gnashing Teeth, sparkling Eyes, killing Stones, Heaven made

made them *precious*. Our Thoughts, which bring us in nothing but trouble and vexation, would as soon bring us joy and pleasure, did we turn them to proper Objects. A thought of the heavenly Glory, is as soon thought as of an earthly Cross. We complain, the World troubles us, then, What do we there? Why get we not up by the Elevation of our Souls, into that quieter Region? What trouble would the thoughts of future Happiness be unto us? O! who would not expect, that a *Journey* which hath so blessed an *end*, and so good Accommodations by the *way*, should be passed with all imaginable chearfulness and alacrity? That we should live here Learners and Practitioners of that State of unmixed, interminable Joy, to which we aspire? The most formidable Calamities of this World, are below all measure of comparison, to that Happiness, which admits of no *Hyperbole*, intailed on patient Sufferers under them.

The Example of CHRIST.

CONsidering our great *Exemplar* of *Suffering* and *Patience*, how can we be *Impatient Sufferers*? Who can be troubled at *Want*, that worships a *God*, willing to live and dye in Sorrow? His Mother not rich enough to bring a Lamb for an *Offering*; a few Barley Loaves and Fishes, provision for his Train? Or value *Esteem*, when he was so undervalued, traduced, envied, reproached, betrayed by his own Servant, abandoned by all his Disciples except one, who followed him longest, to renounce him the more shamefully by a three-fold abjuration; put to Death by his Country-men; his Tribute paid by a Fish; his Triumphs solemniz'd by another's Asses-Colt; Born among Beasts; Liv'd, if not upon Alms, among Publicans; Dy'd among Thieves; his Birth without a Cradle; his Burial, without a Rag, or Grave of his own; and, the price of his Blood buys a Burial-place for Strangers. What lower degree of Poverty, than to take his Beginning in a Stable? To make his End on a Dunghil?
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noisom and ignominious through the Carcasses and Offences of the Executed? Where he offered a Sacrifice of sweet smelling favour unto God, and purchased Glory unto Men.

Why wouldst *thou* not, whose is the Earth, and the fulness thereof, raise to thy self a Palace compiled of those precious Stones, which lie hid in the close Coffer of that thy inferiour Treasury? And command all the *Potentates* of the Earth to attend thy Train, with the glorious Retinue of blessed Angels? Why did not thy stately Followers, glitter in their shining Liveries? And the quintessence of all this World's Delicacies, appear to furnish thy Table? Since thou wouldest come to our *Earth*, why wouldst thou not enjoy the best Entertainment it could give thee? But from the supereminent height of Glory, stoop to abase thy self to the sufferance of Extremities and Indignities; and sink thy self to the bottom of Abjectedness, to exalt our Condition to the contrary Extreme? How should we learn both to want, and abound from *thee*, when abounding with the Glory and Riches of Heaven, wouldest want

want a Lodging in thy first Welcome to the World? How can it deject us to be rejected of the World, which is none of ours; when thou camest to thy own, and thy own received thee not? What wonder for thy Servants to walk about in Sheep-skins, and Goat-skins, destitute, afflicted, tormented; when their Lord is denyed harbour, and safety for his Life? Why wouldest thou be thus homely, but that, by contemning worldly Glory, thou mightest teach us to do so: And sanctifie *Poverty* unto them, whom thou callest unto *Want*? That, since thou, who hast the choice of all earthly Conditions, wouldest be born poor, and live despised, those which must want out of necessity, might not think their *Poverty* grievous? Who can murmur and repine under the hardest Usages, that considers thou (who knewest all from the beginning) chosest to suffer uncivil Men to croud thee with the Horse and the Ass in a publick Stable; to have Contempt thrown upon thy *Poverty*; and Neglect added to all Inconveniencies; not only to appear mean, but even to force others to think meanly of thee? He that made
all

all places, finds none himself, and is content : He that hath *many Mansions* for others in his Father's House, hath not the least privacy in an Inn, and complains not, repines not at it. He that would have given his churlish Host an eternal House in Heaven for asking, cannot have the least part of his here, because his Parents seem poor, yet fetches not down Fire to consume him for his Inhumanity. None will have cause to complain of his coarse Robes, hard Bed, thin Table and Attendance, that calls to mind, how it was with the *great King*. Those *Idols* of the *VWorld's* esteem, (Riches and Honour) are so far from making us *truly Happy*, that they are not of themselves eligible, in the number of *good things*. No Man is to be asham'd of, or disquieted with *innocent Poverty*, of which *our Lord* made Election; or worthy to be his Member, that suffered so much for other Men's sins, who cannot endure so little Affliction, if not for his sake, yet for his own. The best Expedient to shame us out of Repinings, is, often to draw this uneven parallel: Confront our petty uneasinesses, with his unspeakable

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Torments : It's impossible then, surely, but our *Admiration*, and *Gratitude* must supplant our *Impatience*. Delicate, tender *Members*, are undecent, unbecoming a *Head* stuck full of Thorns. Our heaviest Crosses are but Chips, or Shavings to his.

He that taketh not up his Cross, and followeth him, [he is not worthy of him ;] as not having the Courage, the Constancy, the Sincerity of a Christian, or of one pretending to so great Benefits, such high Privileges, such excellent Rewards as he proposes; not worthy of the Honour to wait upon him; *cannot be his Disciple*; not capable to be reckon'd among them; shewing such an incapacity to learn, declaring such an indisposition to transcribe those needful Lessons of Humility, Patience, Self-resignation, submission to the Divine Will, so fairly set by the Instruction and Example of him who suffered for us, leaving us an Example that we should follow his steps.

If my *Head* but ache, I lay it down on a soft Pillow, to ease my pain, and lessen my grief; whilst thou had'st no *Death-bed*, but a *Cross*, or Bouldster, but of *Thorns*,
where-

whereon to lay thy weak and wearied Head; no Cloaths to cover, or shelter thee from the stormy Cold, but those of Innocency. VVhen I am Sick, my Friends about me bestir themselves to ease my diseased Body, and revive my fainting Spirits with Cordials and comfortable words, while the only Succour those about thee afford, are bitter Scoffs, and VVine mingled with Gall at thy hour of Death. How may my Face be confounded with shame, who am so way-ward and impatient to suffer a light Affliction, for, or from thee, who endured'st such extreme, unpitied Torments for me?

Can we now imagine it a very happy thing, to be High and Prosperous in the VVorld? To swim in affluence and Pleasure? Can we take it for a Misery to be Mean and Low? To conflict with Want and Straits here, seeing the Fountain of all Happiness purposely condescended to so forlorn a State, and was pleas'd to become so deep a Sufferer?

Beholding this Tragick Spectacle, with devout eyes of our minds, How can we but disregard the deceitful Vanities, the
mis-

mischievous Delights of this VVorld ? How can we but reconcile our Minds to the worst Condition, support our Hearts under the heaviest Pressures, submit chearfully to, gladly accept of the Divine Disposal, however grievous and afflicting to our natural VVill ? Can we reasonably expect ? Can we ardently desire ? Can we eagerly affect great Prosperity, when our Lord tasted such Adversity ? Can we admire those splended Trifles which he never regarded in his Life, and which at his Death only served to mock and abuse him ? Can we relish those sordid Pleasures, of which he willingly vouchsafed not to taste, and the Contraries whereof he dying, chose to bear in the extremity ? Can we disdain or despise a State of Sorrow and Disgrace, when he by voluntary susception of it, hath so dignified and graced, by which we so nearly resemble, and become so conformable to him, concur and partake with him, yea, by which in some Cases we may promote, and after a sort, compleat his designs, *filling up that which is behind, of the Afflictions of Christ in our flesh* ? Who can now hugely prefer, being esteemed, approved, favoured

voured, commended by Men, before infamy, reproach, derision, persecution? Who can be ambitious of worldly Honour, or Repute, covetous of Wealth, or greedy of Pleasure, who observes him chusing rather to hang upon a Cross, than sit upon a Throne: Inviting the Clamours of Scorn and Spite, rather than Acclamations of Blessing and Praise: Devesting himself of all secular Power, Pomp, Plenty, Conveniency, and Solace: Embracing the Garbe of a Slave, the Repute of a Malefactor; before the Dignity and Respect of a Prince, which were his Due, which he most easily could have obtained.

Here thou healedst all that came unto thee; far be it from me, to think thy Glory hath abated of thy Power, of thy Mercy, of thy Compassion: that the Head is less pitiful on the Throne, than on the Foot-stool. In all our Afflictions, thou art afflicted. Still and ever, thou art our assured, faithful, all sufficient Physician, and healest all that come unto thee! 'tis as impossible we should want help, as thou Power, and Mercy. No Disease shall ever thrust any of thy Patients into the Grave,

Grave, till thou turnest the Key, and open it. Give me but as much *Comfort* in this my Sorrow, as thou givest me *Security*, and at the worst I shall do well.

Now is the time of my great Providence, and Patience, Fortitude, and Courage : To bring forth that Store, I have been so long gathering : To practise that Christianity, I have so pleasantly, so peaceably professed. O! let my temper, and moderation appear in this difficulty. Let the World see the fruit of my *Religion*, that there is more in it than a bare Name ; that I can wisely digest my own desires, as well advise my self, as others. 'Tis a scandal to Religion, to afflict our selves with great and heavy Sadness, whilst patient Sufferings, are highly instructive to our Brethren. Where is the Consolation of Holy Scripture ? Where is the fruit of Preaching ? Where is the sweetness of Prayer ? Where is the Counsel of wise Men ? Where is the Result of Experience ? Where is the Exercise of Faith and Love, and Patience ? Where are my good Thoughts, purposes, and Resolutions, so well taken in the time of my Prosperity, to be an example of
Courage

Courage to the rest of Mankind? Where is that Cloud of Witnesses, of so many patient ones, whose Constancy I have so oft admired? Especially, *my Lord and Saviour*, the most glorious Character of Patience, and Submission; Freedom, and Courtesie; Candor, and Ingenuity; Lowliness, and Humility; Gentleness and Meekness; Charity, and Compassion, Kindness, and Affability; Mildness and Forgiveness; Trust, and Confidence. An *Abyss* of Love, of Mercy, of Dolor, of Ignominy, of Blood, of Loathing, of Excess, of Admiration, of Amazement; which swelleth all Thoughts, drieth up all Tears, stoppeth all Mouths, easeth all Pains, drencheth all Conceptions, dims the Lustre of all Earthly Grandeur and Beauty, damps the Scenes of all Carnal delights and satisfactions, quashes all that extravagant Joy, which we can find in any wild Frolick, or Riotous Merri-ment; staineth all our Pride, checks all Wantonness, disposes our Minds to prefer submission to God's Will, before Compliance with the Fancies and Desires of Men. Who can now complain, he doth, or suffereth too much? Or is treated with
less

less tenderness than he deserves? All I endure, is nothing, to what I should, and thou didst for me, O Blessed Jesus; the Contemplation and Application of thy Sufferings, is enough to sweeten a whole Life of Bitterness. I care not how unpleasant a Portion I find here, so the Power and Virtue of thy pretious Death may season it to my Soul.

The Conclusion of the foregoing Considerations.

AND now methinks amidst *these Thoughts*, it is no uneasie thing, in all Estates to be *Content*: And, not so much to *Suffer*, as *Receive* all that happens, as if I would not have it fall out otherwise. Methinks I could now extract, gain out of *Losses*, and stand upon the Ruines of them, saying, I have lost nothing; make *Damage* it self, give Interest, for whatever it takes from me; The crossiest Accidents, Advantage, comply with, and serve my main Concern; and my very Enemies, tributary to my Welfare.

Oh!

Oh! how unconcern'd might I pass through the Allurements and Affrightments of this Flatering, Molesting, Tumultuous, busie World, but for my base, distrustful, evil Heart of Unbelief, in departing from the Living God; who by his own Communication, can make a rich atnends for the loss of any Temporal Concernments; and deliver me from the want of them, even while they are wanting. That will not fail to give Patience, if not Peace; Contentment, if not Riches; *Submission to his Will*, if not the fulfilling of *my own*. And, 'tis almost all one, never to be *in Want*, or never to be *without Contentment*.

Was my Treasure in Heaven, and my Heart fixed there, upon the Center of my Bliss and Happiness; how unmov'd would the Rumours of Wars, and Devastations find, and leave me; which invade, and agitate Mens Breasts, and so disturb their most pleasant composed Hours. I should let him alone to rule the World, that made it; to take care of me and mine, who hath engaged it; who cannot but do it; whose Care and Providence watches over me; whose, Eye and
Ear,

Ear, and Arms, are open to me; whose Bowels yearn for me; whose Blood purchas'd me; whose eternal Blessedness awaits me.

Had I conquer'd my Inclinations to *things below*, and rais'd my Mind above *their* Crosses and Contents: Did I always retain a profound Indifferency for all those various Fancies which trouble and disquiet the doting Worldling, and its fond Admirers: How confidently, undauntedly, might I march among them; dreadful, unshaken, unconfused; despising all that, which is the strife and vexation, toil, and ruin of Mankind.

Were I but once arriv'd at a true indifferency of Mind; Acquiescence in, Resignation, ready Compliance to Infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness; and fear'd doing, instead of suffering Evil: How Serene? How full of Tranquility should I be, amidst the Changes, Commotions, Tumults, and Convulsions, of this stormy Region, this uncertain State? Though my Lot fell in that Age, that stands next the Worlds last Calenture, when the whole frame of Nature shall be in an Agony, and burning Fit?

H

Did

Did my Faith give me a constant lively view, of those *Rewards* of Vertue which God hath promis'd; and his Followers are now Blessed in: How secure should I sit from the Blasts of Fortune, in that place of uninterrupted perfect Joy; and look down with Compassion, Scorn, and Indignation, upon this little Mole-hill of busie Ants, as Fools and Mad-men; though all the World conspir'd to make me miserable.

Oh! Could I but be taken up more with the Love of God; had I an absolute *Empire* over my Passions; did I rightly embrace the Reconciliation wrought with him through Jesus Christ, and maintain'd that Faith by good Works; were I always careful of pleasing him, and my own Conscience: Might I but see, and feel the loveliness of my dear Redeemer, till my heart was fill'd, and raviht with that Love. Had I but more of the Spirit of Adoption, and those filial Affections to my Heavenly Father: Could I but breath and pant more earnestly after him, and maintain a constant Correspondence and Communion with him: How little should I value? How easily

easily could I spare those Trifles, which the purblind World admire? How careless should I be, who had the Pleasures, Honours, Riches of it? How far should I be from envying of them? I would pity the miserable *Tyrants* of this World, as *Slaves*, and worse than *Beggars*, that taste not of that Kingdom of Love and Pleasure which dwells in a true Believers Breast? I would bear the loss of other things, with the same frame of Spirit, I enjoy'd them; refuse to part with no enjoyment, to secure this, and follow all the Pomp, and Pleasure of the World to the Grave, without a sad Heart, or a sorrowful Countenance. I would sit down contentedly, in a sense of my *Father's Love*, though I had nothing else; yea, reckon I had all, if I wanted not this. Rest satisfi'd if I have but a *Father in Heaven*, though I have *never a Friend upon Earth*; shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Death it self should not dismay me; but be welcomed with Joy and Gladness, as an *Auxiliary* sent from God, to give me the *Day and Triumph* over all my *Conflicts*: To free me from the Troubles, and Uneasiness of a wretch-

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ed Life. *That* takes off all our Burdens, strikes the sweat off our Brow, calls us for ever off our war-fare, sounds the joyful Retreat from all our Conflicts, frees the *Captive* without Ransom, dismisses the *Oppressed*, without the consent of the Oppressor; brings home the *Banished*, in spite of the Banisher; heals the *Sick*, without pain of Physick; mends all marred Fortunes; repairs all Damages and Disasters; makes even all Disorders and Inequalities; necessitates us to be no more miserable. The dust of the Grave will dry up our Tears, bury all our Cares in Silence and Oblivion. VVe shall have a sure Repose in that *Bed of Rest*, and never be put to the *Hazzard* of a *Battel* more. His everlasting Arms stand open to receive and Crown us, (as soon as the Fight is over) in that quiet Region, where all Evil is separated from us; no Enemy to appear against us, no discomposure, interruption, or end of perfect Joy, Tranquility and Happiness. VVhere patient, chearful, enduring hardship in our *Warfare*, is *recorded*, reckon'd among our *Faithful Services*; light Afflictions for a moment, rewarded

warded with a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory. VWhere we shall put off our *Helmet*, and put on our *Crown*; exchange the whole Armour of God, for Robes and Diadems, Scepters and Palms; Ensigns of Kings, and Conquerours. Where are *Mansions* made ready for us, that call *Escurials*, *Louvres*, the stateliest, proudest Structures, but better modell'd *Dunghills*, lessening into inconsiderableness, undiscernableness. A solid secure resting place, after our weary Pilgrimage, in our *Fathers House* and *Love*; liable to no Injury, Repair, or Decay, Hazard, or Calamity, Fire, or Storm, Thief, or Moth, Disturbance, Disinheritance, or Ejectment. Where he will familiarly converse with, and entertain all his *Domesticks*, his *Followers*; who shall be, not as unconcern'd Spectators, but interested Possessors, glorified together with him. Where the *Tree of Knowledge*, shall be without Enclosure: And the most voluptuous *Epicurism* in reference to it, be innocent. Where there shall be neither *Lust*, nor *forbidden Fruit*. Where the pleasure of Speculation shall be without the Toil; and that Maxim

be eternally antiquated, *He that encreases Knowledge, encreaseth Sorrow.* Where we shall discern the apt Conjunctions, and admirable Dependancies of things, which, when acted upon the Stage of this World, seem'd so cross, so perplex'd, so full of mysterious Intricacy. Where we shall for ever contemplate the extent of that All-creating, All-ruling Power, the principle of all action, life, and motion through the whole Creation, that turns the mighty Wheel of Providence, throughout the succession of all time. Where Goodness, Grace, and Mercy shall be fully opened; and the difficulty vanish, of reconciling *fatherly Severity*, with *Love*. Where after all discomposures here, our Spirits shall return to a consistency; and the same invariable appearances of Glory, be always present, without being sullied, obscured, or in a declination. Where the Law of Sin, shall never check the Law of God; but all rebellious Reluctancies, Contentions, Contradictions cease for ever. No more Reproaches, Oppressions, or Persecutions. No more false Accusations, halings into Prisons, draggings before Tribunals. No more
wandering

wandring into Desarts, in Sheep-skins, in Goat-skins, in Dens, and Caves of the Earth. All Infirmities, sinful Inclinations, and Indispositions, unmortified Corruptions, tumultuous Passions, Storms, and Tempests, Fears, and Cares, Pains, Diseases, Distempers, and Uneasinesses, are wholly cured and removed, have now found a Period, are for ever vanish'd and done away.

En-

Encouragement
 Against the
Fear of Fire,
 And (the usual Effects of it)
POVERTY.

Pfal. 4. 8.

*I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep:
 For thou Lord only makest me dwell in
 safety.*

INnumerable Evils molest and afflict
 the Ungodly: The troublesome
Companions of Fears, and Jealousies,
 and dismal Apprehensions, croud in,
 surprize, and continually haunt them.,
 when they have no others : Deprive
 them

them of, or disturb their natural Rest. Their Sleep is broken, or departs from them. They are no where safe and free from *Fear*, or insensible of their *Danger*; always exposed to *it* (being under Divine Displeasure) and discharged from all kind of Protection. Neither God, nor Angels, undertake to defend, or preserve them, or theirs. Whilst those that are *truly Good*; of the same Spirit, and in the same Condition with *David*; have a full perswasion that they are reconciled to *God*, in his Love and Favour, under the light of his Countenance: They are on good grounds, free from all inordinate Disturbances, and Disquietments of Soul: And enjoy a Serenity both of *State* and *Mind*. It's not enough for us that we are *safe*, unless we *think our selves so*: That we have *freedom* and *safety* of *Spirit*, and of *Condition*; both which are the gift of God, to those who cast all their care and fear, place all their confidence on him, rely upon his Providence and Protection, who only sustains, supports, and upholds them, and their Habitations: Is the cause of their fearlessness, and security: Pacifies, and quiets,

when nothing else will, or can : Causes them to be unconcern'd for probable Calamities : To be *mindful of nothing but their Duty*; as knowing, their God whom they serve, is able to deliver them, and that he will deliver them (a). That they securely compose themselves, with the Man after God's own heart, saying, *I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep ; for thou Lord only makest me to dwell in safety.*

They are fully satisfied of his Affection towards them, his continual Care of them, his Providence over them. That their Helper is always with them, nearer than their Danger, and when in the midst of it, they are under the shadow of his Wings. That all Elements are commanded and restrained by him. That all things are in his Power, and at his Disposal : And that he will neither do, nor suffer any thing, but what shall make most for *their* good and benefit. That nothing comes by blind Chance and Necessity. That all things are managed, and disposed by Sovereign Reason, and Wisdom; whose eye is always upon

(a) Dan. 3. 17.

them,

them, who is engaged to protect and succour them. VVhat then can happen, that should molest or displease them? How can he that firmly believes him most powerful and able, most kind and willing, ever present, and ready to help him, be in any case disconsolate? Or despair of seasonable Relief? Or take any thing amiss, as if it could happen *better*, than, as infinite Goodness pleaseth, and infinite Wisdom determines? *That's best*, which is the work of God. The World cannot be better at this instant, than it is: Nor any thing (which is the work of God) better; because it is as he willeth it to be: But when he changeth them, 'twill then be best, that they are changed.

We should therefore, not only be satisfied with, and acquiesce in, but praise and adore all Occurrences of Divine Providence, how distasteful soever to sense; concluding, a just and reasonable cause lyeth under them; tho' indiscernable to us. He can do us no wrong, if he would, such is his essential holiness; he would do us no wrong if he could, such is his infinite justice: He will do nothing but
what's

what's consistent with infinite VVisdom, Goodness, Mercy, and every Perfection; How unreasonable then is it, not to submit to all these? If the *Will* of the Saints in Heaven were not perfectly conform'd to the VVill of God, they could not be free from Misery: *Abraham* would be ever and anon grieving to think of *Dives*, and others in his direful State. It's our perfection, ease, and happiness, chearfully to comply with, and refer all to the good pleasure of Almighty God. If we make his VVill, our own, we shall have all things we desire: Command all Events, bear the loss of any thing without repining against him, who indeed, is the true Proprietor. We shall never differ with him about that which is his own. We shall have peace with him, and within whatsoever we undergo. As willingly suffer any thing from him, as for him. That which is grievous to particular persons, may be good for the Publick; grievous to the Body, good for the Soul; grievous at present, good for the future, though we see it not now. No evil can befall him that wholly resigns himself, and all he hath, to the VVill of God.

Who

Who should rule the VVorld, but he that made it, that upholds it by the Word of his Power? Or dispose of us and ours, but him whose we are, in whom we believe, and whom we serve? VVho, or whatsoever the Instruments are, it's enough for us, that, *the Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh* (b). *He distributeth to every Man, even, as he will. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up* (c). *Shall there be evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it?* He causeth it to Rain upon one City, and not upon another (d), upon Sodom and Gomorrah, and not upon Zoar (e). VVhat Houses or Goods in it, to be consum'd, or preserv'd? There's such an *Hedge* about the *Person*, and *Substance* of every good Man; *about him, and about his House, and about all that he hath, on every side, that none of them can be touched* without divine permission (f). *Fire, and Hail, Snow, and Vapour, stormy Winds* (while laying waste, are) *fulfilling his Word*. (g). VVho saith unto them, hitherto shall ye go, and no fur-

(b) Job 1.21. (c) 1 Sam. 2.7. (d) Am. 3.6. and 4.7.
 (e) Gen. 19.21, &c. (f) Job 1.10. (g) Psal. 148.8.

ther. All Creatures, Elements, wicked Men, have *no power* at all against us, except it be given them from above (*h*). Our *Houses* as well as our most Minute-parts (the Hairs of our Head) are under the protection of the same all-watchful Providence: VVhen we make *them Churches* (*i*), he will make them *Sanctuaries*, places of Safety, and Refuge to us (*k*).

The *Cattle* as well as *Infants*, are brought in by God, as an Argument to spare *Nineveh* (*l*). He regardeth whatsoever he hath made. He preserveth Man and Beast (*m*), particularly is stiled the *preserver of Men* (*n*). *The Saviour of all Men, specially of those that believe* (*o*). The Guardian and Protector of all good Men. He will never in the least neglect them, much less abandon the Care of them (*p*).

So far as *Temporals* are good for them, he hath as much secured to them, as eternal life. *He will give Grace and Glory, no good thing will he with-hold from them that*

(*h*) John 19.11. (*i*) Rom. 16.5. (*k*) Isa. 8.14. (*l*) Jon. 4.11. (*m*) Psal. 36.6. (*n*) Job 7.20. (*o*) 1 Tim. 4.10. (*p*) Heb. 13.5.

walk uprightly. They that seek the Lord, shall not want any good thing (q). Lay not wait, O wicked Man, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting places (r). When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid; yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet (s). My people shall dwell in a peaceable Habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places (t). Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely (u). He that hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil (w). Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe (x). The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them (y). Behold, he that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep (z). (They must needs be safe, whom God keeps.) The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord, he is their strength in the time of trouble, and the Lord shall help them, and deliver them, because they trust in him (a). The Lord is a strong hold in the day of Trouble, and he knoweth them that trust

(q) Psal. 84. 11. and 34. 10. (r) Pro. 24. 15. (s) Pro. 3. 24. (t) Isa. 32. 18. (u) Jer. 23. 6. (w) Pro. 1. 33. (x) Pro. 29. 25. (y) Psal. 34. 7. (z) Psal. 121. v. 3, 4, 5. (a) Psal. 37. 39, &c.

in him (b). He that's assured these declarations and promises, were not made to mock, or deceive him, but seriously made, and will certainly be perform'd, How free must his mind be from all solicitude, and anxiety? How steady a calm, how sweet a serenity, will a firm belief, spread over his Soul, in regard of all contingencies and disasters? Could we but as stedfastly believe his Promises, as he will certainly perform them, to them that do; they would as much refresh us, as their performance could.

The blessedness of the righteous here, consists, not in freedom from suffering, but satisfaction under it. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Blessed is the Man that endureth temptation (c), Behold, happy is the Man whom God correcteth (d). Take my Brethren, the Prophets (and Apostles) for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience (e). VVho were, as sorrowful, yet always rejoycing; as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, and yet possessing all things (f). As if they had only the shadow of evil, but

(b) Na. 1. 7. (c) Ja. 5. 11. and 1. 12. (d) Job 5. 17.
(e) Ja. 5. 10. (f) 2 Cor. 6. 10.

really the *substance of all good*. VVhen he sees it best for us, not to preserve us from, he will support us under (*a*) as great a mercy as to be delivered out) comfort us in, reward us for, all our Tribulations. His grace shall be sufficient for us (*g*). He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able ; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it (*h*). He hath commanded us to be *careful for nothing* (*i*). To *cast all our care upon him*, because he *careth for us* (*k*). *All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto such as keep his covenant, and his testimonies*. His delight is in them that fear him, and put their trust in his mercy. And upon *these terms* we may plead it with, and expect it from him. *Preserve me for I am holy, save thy servant that putteth his trust in thee. I am thine, save me* (*l*). He hath promised to give us contented minds under all his dealings with us. *The fear of the Lord tendeth to life, and he that hath it, shall abide satisfied : He shall not be visited with evil, his Soul shall dwell at*

(*g*) 2 Cor. 12. 9. (*h*) 1 Cor. 10. 13. (*i*) Phil. 4. 6. (*k*) 1 Pet. 5. 7. (*l*) Ps. 25. 10. 147. 11. and 86. 2.

ease (m). Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee ; because he trusteth in thee (n).

A dejected spirit lives much beneath the rate of *Christian Principles* and *Priviledges*. There's a holy chearfulness and greatness of Mind, that becomes the saddest Providence. *At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh (o).* VVhen in the habitual bent of our Souls, we desire to please God, we are to discharge our selves of all unsutable Cares ; and abandon all suspicious hard thoughts of him. Be deeply concern'd for *his Concernments*, without any apprehension, or fear, that he will neglect *those* which are most truly ours. Can Men excel God in praise-worthy Actions ? Any one Relation (as Father, Friend, Husband, Brother, &c.) where there's Affection, is a great security for our trust. How much more then when they meet all in one ? VVill he not take care of his own, who hath put so ill a note on them that do not, to be *worse than Infidels (p)* ? Religion lies much in trusting God, and living a

(m) Prov. 19. 23. Ps. 25. 13. (n) Isa. 26. 3. (o) Job 5. 22. (p) 1 Tim. 5. 8.

a life of Faith. They strangely mistake it, that think it consists in doubts, distrusts, and fears. When *Berromæus* was told of some that lay in wait for his Life, he chearfully answered, *An Deus est in Mundo pro nihil? What, is God in the World for nought? Paulus Camilius* being made the *Roman General*; as soon as he came to the Camp, every one was forward to give him *their Advice*; *Have you a Care* (saith he to them) *but to fight well, and I'll take care of the rest.* Our Duty is, faithfully to *discharge it*, and to let God alone to *take Care* of us, and ours; as being propt with an Arm upon which all the Crowns of the Earth might Repose the care of their conservation.

What can discompose him, who knows himself (if he pleases) immoveably happy. That his best Goods are secure from all attaques, and beyond the reach of any misfortune. That, desiring what is best, he cannot fail of his desire. *The desire of the righteous shall be granted* (q). That (himself excepted) all the World cannot wrong, or hurt him. *There shall no evil happen to the*

(q) Prov. 10. 24.

just (r). If he be rendered harbourless, thinks it not strange concerning the fiery Tryal, which is to try him, as though some strange thing happened unto him (s). Our Lord and Master had not where to lay his head (t). His faithful Followers, of whom the World was not worthy, wandered in Desarts, and in Mountains, and in Dens and Caves of the Earth, (u) and had no certain Dwelling-place (w). And took joyfully the spoiling of their Goods, knowing in themselves that they had in Heaven, a better, and an enduring substance (x). *Poverty* is made *ease*, by a *contented mind*, a *trouble* by envy at more plentiful Fortunes. Why should we much value those splendid toys, that sordid trash, which Men so eagerly pursue? Or amuse ourselves with trivial matters; *impertinent* at least, if not *prejudicial* to our *main Concern*? What are our *Bodies* too much pampered, but as so many reeking Dung-hills, annoying our Souls, with ill steams, and vapours? Are we fitter for any Service of God or Man, for having *more*

(r) Prov. 12.21. (s) 1 Pet. 4.12. (t) Mat. 8.20. (u) Heb 11.38. (w) 1 Cor. 4.11. (x) Heb. 10.34.

than

than will satisfy hunger? And we undervalue, dishonour, reproach, our heavenly Father, to *doubt of Necessaries*: Hired Servants have Bread enough and to spare, in a good Man's House (*y*). The great House-keeper of the World, will not starve any of his Family. The young Lyons seek their Meat from God; what they gather, or meet with in their pursuit, is his Gift to them. He giveth to the Beast his Food, and to the young Ravens (Birds of prey) when they cry (*z*), of as small value as Sparrows are, not one of them are forgotten before God (*a*). He that feeds the Fowls of the Air, and cloaths the Grass of the Field, will not starve us, though unable, if willing, to toil or spin, sow, or reap, or gather into Barns. He never suffers those of a diligent hand, a frugal, merciful disposition, to want (tho' he may, pride, prodigality, idleness.) *David*, when old, had *never seen the Righteous forsaken, nor his (righteous) Seed begging Bread* (*b*). He makes their Enemies to be at peace with them, to be kind unto them.

(*y*) Lu. 15. 17. (*z*) Ps. 104. 27. and 147. 9. (*a*) Lu. 12. 6. (*b*) Psal. 37. 25.

To

To be pittied of those that carry them away Captive (c). And the barbarous People to shew them no little kindness (d).

We shall be satisfied with what the fire leaves, if, having Food and Rayment, we can (as we ought) be therewith content (e). *Jacob* indented with God for no more than *Bread to eat, Rayment to put on* (f). *Agar* prays only for *Food convenient*, and deprecates Riches (g). *A hundred* that were *the Lord's Prophets*, lived in a Cave with *Bread and Water* (h). The *Israelites* for their murmuring when they enjoy'd *that*, were destroy'd of the destroyer (i). What a Feast would a Belly-full of it been, when an Asses Head was sold for fourscore Pieces of Silver; And the fourth part of a Cab of Doves Dung, for five Pieces of Silver (k)? Are we better than *Lazarus*, who would have been glad of the Crums that fell from the rich Man's Table? Than *John the Baptist*, who was cloathed in Camels-Hair, a leathern Girdle about his

(c) Psal. 106. 46. (d) Acts 28. 2. (e) 1 Tim. 6. 8. (f) Gen. 28. 20. (g) Prov. 30. 8. (h) 1 Kin. 18. 4. (i) 1 Cor. 10. 10. (k) 2 Kin. 6. 25.

Loyns, his Meat, Locusts, and wild Honey? Would *the habit of sheep-skins, and goat-skins*, become us worse than the Primitive Worthies (l)? Shall we not be content with mean, with any Dwellings; when Dens and Caves satisfied better than we? How many wandred forty years in a barren Wilderness, having no Houses; rejoicing in this, *Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations* (m). Mean and old Cloaths will serve us (it did them) well enough, while we are assured we are travelling to the Land of Promise: *The lines are fallen* (we shall then say) *unto us, in a pleasant place, yea, we have a goodly Heritage* (n).

He takes himself here, to have no abiding Habitation, no Treasure, or considerable Interest, no continuing City. That he is out of his Element, and resting place; a Pilgrim, a Stranger, a Sojourner, in passage towards his true home; whither his desires and hopes do all tend; where his main concern and felicity lies, the great object of his affection, love, and esteem resides. *And they that say such things, declare plainly, that they seek*

(l) Heb. 11. 37. (m) Ps. 90. 1. (n) Ps. 16. 6.

a Country, that is, an Heavenly. Wherefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a City, (o). An House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens; (and O how excellent and glorious!) that hath the Omnipotent God, the Founder of it; infinite Wisdom, and Power to contrive and erect it; infinite Treasure and Glory, to enrich, adorn, and beautifie it. As far transcending all earthly Glory and Happiness, as the curious Frame of Heaven and Earth, excels the clay Cottages made with hands by Men.

To the deadness of our Faith, to our Infidelity, and Insincerity, are all our Fears to be imputed. We do not believe in God, his Presence with us, his Providence over us. We are not fully perswaded of his good will unto us, his particular care of us. We do not confide in his help; not rely on his word; we have not respect to the recompence of Reward. If you will not believe, surely you shall not be established (p). O precious Faith working by Love! that would create a just indifferency and unconcernedness, as to al

(o) Heb. 11. 14, 16. (p) Isa. 7. 9.

sublu-

sublunary things: And fix our minds above, where true undisturbed rest, is only to be found: Make us conclude ourselves safe at all times, and notwithstanding all hazards. Carry us with insuperable constancy, through all difficulties and dangers: Steel us against all perplexing apprehensions: Vanquish all slavish fears: Prevent all immoderate desires of earthly enjoyments: Allay all our Sorrows for their dissolution.

I

Encon-

Encouragement

Against

Evil-Tidings.

Pfal. 112. 7.

*He shall not be afraid of Evil-Tidings :
His Heart is fixed , trusting in the
Lord.*

IN Times of Trouble and Perplexity, arising through the prospect and prognostics of approaching Miseries; when Mens Hearts are failing them for Fear, and for looking after those things that are coming upon them: There's nothing more desirable than inward *Rest* and *Peace*, which they can never possess, who entertain *Evil-Tidings* with
with

with dismaied Minds, and have nothing to trust to, or rest upon, but what may be damaged or taken from them. *Fear of future Trouble* is the great disturber of Humane Life; molests our quiet hours with dismal apprehensions; prevents not, nor eases an expected Calamity; torments us before it comes, more than the Calamity it self; renders us more unable to bear, and encreases the present Burthen, by adding to it all that possibly we may undergo. 'Tis therefore no inconsiderable part of his Prerogative and Happiness, *that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his Commandments* (a): That he is of a stable establish'd Spirit, *fixed* for all Essays; to stand firm, to retain the quiet and serenity of his Soul, notwithstanding all occurrences, and Disasters; though all about him be in a Combustion: Immutably resolv'd to maintain his *Station*, notwithstanding all the attempts made to beat him from it; *Though an Host should encamp against me; my Heart shall not fear; though War should rise against me, in this will I be confident* (b). Plots, or Invasions, threat-

(a) Vers. 1. (b) Psal. 27. 3.

ning Devastation, Ruin, and general Destruction, move not, nor invade his pious armed Breast, which is proof against all those occasions which unsettle, and transport all others; they shall leave him as they find him, erect, settled, not to be moved by them. The Tranquility of his mind he will hold fast, and not let it go, nothing shall disturb him so long as he lives. He laughs at all those foolish Amusements, to which others abandon themselves; and lives as comfortably, notwithstanding all storms and inconveniencies, as others in the most serene undisturbed State. A perpetual natural goodness, is neither diminished nor shaken with any casualty or disappointment: *The Righteous is an everlasting Foundation (c)*. He sails along this tempestuous Sea, where one Wave is perpetually pressing upon the neck of another, with an even, calm, serene Soul: Entertains the fiercest Threatning with an unshaken mind: Stands unmov'd, when all things are staggering and reeling into disorder and confusion: Fearlessly beholds an awaiting danger. Is priviledg'd against

(c) Prov. 10. 25.

the

the dread of those approaching Storms which affright and alarm all the World, *He shall not be afraid of Evil-Tidings, &c.* For, he settles these things in his Heart, That,

(1.) *Feared Evils peradventure may not come : Or not come nigh him (d).* Impendent Judgments may blow over, be warded off; the Island delivered by the pureness of his Hands (e). God may repent him of the Evil that he had said he would do unto it, and not do it (f). However, *publick Calamities* are never so particular, as to reach every Individual. God always in Judgment remembers Mercy : Charges the Destroyer not to come nigh any, on whom is the mark (g). When a Nation is ripe for Ruin, the Harvestman gathereth the Corn, and reapeth the Ears, with his Arms, gleaning Grapes shall be left in it, &c. (h). It may be, he shall be in the number of the few that shall be hid in the day of the Lord's Anger, as standing Monuments of Divine Conduct and Safe-guard.

(2.) *His main Concern is secured and out*

(d) Psal. 91. 7. (e) Job 22. 30. (f) Jon. 3. 10. (g) Ex. 12. 13. Ez. 9. 6. (h) Isa. 17. 5, 6.

of danger. He is Rich in Faith (*k*). Rich in good Works (*l*). Rich towards God (*m*). His Life is hid with Christ in God (*n*). Eternal life, supernatural Goods are incorruptible, independent on Fortune, easte to conserve, not liable to spoil, or a violent hand. External Comforts or Crosses make little accession to, or diminution from the satisfaction and serenity of his Spirit. 'Tis better not to need, to be above, than enjoy *Abundance*. All is well, as long as it is well *within*. When *Simeon* had *Christ* in his Arms, and *Zacheus* *Christ* in his House, how little were they taken with, or concerned for other things? His *real wants* he presumes shall be supply'd. God will not forsake us in our honest Endeavours: He hath ways to help, when visible supplies are removed out of the view of sense. And a little suffices, if God give no more. His Allowance is enough for the Service and Honour he expects from us, to sustain us in our Journey to a better Life. It's not *abundance* Men need, but *satisfied minds*. Having (bare) Food and Rai-

(*k*) Ja. 2. 5. (*l*) 1 Tim. 6. 18. (*m*) Luke 12. 21. (*n*) Col. 3. 3.

ment, let us be therewith Content (o). The continuance of that he reckons a great favour, a new engagement (p). For much Wealth, none are nearer Happiness, nor further from the Grave. 'Ere long, all are turn'd out of the World, as naked as they came into it; and a little time, should make but a little difference. It's our great Imperfection to dislike the perfect Will of God. Two straight things apply'd together, close all along; that which closeth not with what is straight, must needs be crooked. God is too *just* to do us wrong, too *good* to do us hurt, and too *wise* not to know what will do us good or hurt. Therefore *his Children* refer all to *him*, to dispose of *them* and *theirs*. They capitulate not with him what they will have, how much only they will suffer; but resolve all into his will and pleasure, be it never so dismal and afflictive: *Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of Death, &c. All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy Co-*

(o) 1 Tim. 6. 8. (p) Gen. 28. 20, &c.

venant (*q*). 'Tis enough for them *that there is a God* (*r*), who watches over, hath a particular care of them (*s*), that will not be prodigal of their Lives, and Comforts; but use them to his Glory, and their greatest Honour, Gain, and Satisfaction at the last. That, not an hair of their head can fall without his Providence (*t*), much less the head it self. That nothing befalls them but in mercy, *for their good*, (better than if it had been otherwise) which he hath promis'd them in all his dealings towards them, that all shall go well with them, or *end* well for them. That he will not leave them to insupportable difficulties (*u*). That (maugre the malice of Men or Devils) he will guide them to eternal life (*w*), and we may well let him take his own method to bring us thither. Such great Spirits as his, welcome, if not long for an opportunity to try their strength, and shew their Courage, how they can maintain their joy and satisfaction in God, though destitute, and deprived of

(*q*) Psal. 44.19, &c. (*r*) Heb. 11.6. (*s*) 1 Pet. 5.7. (*t*) Mat. 10.30. (*u*) Psal. 37.23,24. 1 Cor. 10.13. 2 Cor. 4.6, &c. (*w*) Luke 12.32.

all Creature supports and comforts (x). He arms himself with the same mind of those worthy Hero's, who are gone before him; the complection and constitution of his Soul we find upon record. *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good* (y). *The people spake of stoning him, but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God* (z), *Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken* (a). *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord* (b). *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble: Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the Sea; though the waters thereof roar, and be troubled, &c.* (c). *They departed from the presence of the Council, rejoycing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name* (d). *And took joyfully the spoyling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they have in Heaven a better, and an enduring substance* (e). *Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall*

(x) Hab. 3. 17, 18. (y) 1 Sam. 3. 18. (z) 1 Sam. 30. 6.
 (a) 2 Kin. 20. 19. (b) Job 1. 21. (c) Psal. 46. 1, &c. (d) Acts 5. 41. (e) Heb. 10. 34.

fruit be in the Vines, the labour of the Olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls : Tet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation (f).

(3.) *The great Sovereign of Heaven and Earth governs the World.* There are no wild accidents of Fortune. Things are not left to the Wills of Men, to blind Chance, to their own Contingency : But are all inspected, guided, and ordered by *him* with good Advice. However things go or varie, *he* is still the same, and will order all things well. No snares, intrigues, or difficulties puzzle, or prevent the ways and purposes of God. Whatsoever Contrivances, and Confusions be amongst Men, he still keeps his Throne ; manages his regal Office ; never lets loose the Reins of his Government of the World, though the Instruments of his over-ruling Power may be guilty of Violence and Injustice. *If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a Province, marvel not at the matter ; for he*

(f) Ilab. 3. 17, 18.

that

that is higher than the highest, regardeth, and there be higher than they (g). The Tragical Rents and Revolutions of States and Kingdoms ; the Fate of *Cæsar*, and *Pompey* ; the disappointment of Councils, the conservation of the *Capitol* ; the defeats of Armies fleht with long success ; the disrobing of Majesty ; the pulling asunder the Thrones of mighty Empires ; the numerous Accidents and Traverses of humane Life ; all Transactions publick and private, depend upon the disposing will and pleasure of God. He over-rules all Consultations, Affairs, Designs, and Endeavours, concerning Kingdoms and Communities, in infinite Wisdom, as is most conducing to the holy and just ends of the Divine Government, and good of his People. Can and will, as he sees best, blast and disappoint the most politick Devices, and Machinations, infatuate the prudentest Councils, defeat the formidablest Army or Armada, and make the Earth help the Woman (*b*), bring about his own glorious designs, by what seemed most to oppose it ; suffer no more ambitious rage, spite,

(g) *Eccles. 5.8.* (*b*) *Rev. 12.16.*

and:

and Cruelty, than shall conduce to it; Surely the wrath of Man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain (i). He stilleth the noise of the Seas, the noise of their Waves, and the tumult of the People (k). tho' they seem as ungovernable as the vast Ocean. Saying, hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be staid (l). If he be so punctual and exact, as to weigh the Winds, and measure the Waters in dispensing them (m): Much more in ordering the Governments, States, and Affairs of the World. He ruleth by his power for ever, his eyes behold the Nations; let not the rebellious exalt themselves (n). 'Tis very unsuitable to the Spirit and Power of Religion, to give up all for lost, when second causes fail, as to divine ability and fidelity, for the accomplishing and effecting of what concerns himself and us; the Glory of his Name and Kingdom, and our Good, as subordinate and related thereunto. And no good Man can look for any thing, to the dishonour of his God, and to the real pre-

(i) Psal. 76. 10. (k) Psal. 65. 7. (l) Job 38. 11. (m) Job 28. 25. (n) Psal. 66. 7.

judice of God's great Concern and Kingdom. Be sure, his Interest shall prosper more or less, and all attempts to undermine it be defeated. The *Philistins* conquered *Israel*, but the *Ark* conquered the *Philistins*. He will have a *Church* in the World, and an *Altar* in it. The *Tabernacle* may have its *remove*, but shall never be *destroy'd*, till folded up in his *Sanctuary*. We may composedly leave *that* to himself, which he hath so nearly espoused, laid so near his own heart. He will disperse the black Cloud that it fall not in a Storm; or bring light out of darkness, order out of confusion, good out of other's thoughts and designs of evils (o). The *Removal*, hath been the *spreading* of the *Gospel*; the Blood of Martyrs the Seed of the Church: Profelyted its Persecutors, who have leaped out of Infidelity, into Martyrdom. Did we see God at the *end* of Causes, we could no more murmur at his *Providence*, than we can against his *Creation*. Shall we prescribe Rules to that Sovereign, how to act, that are unable to prescribe our own Remedy? We may well

(o) Gen. 50. 20.

trust *him to rule the World*, who hath done it nigh Six Thousand Years, without committing one Error or oversight. Rejoycing that he hath an unquestionable superintendency over all the Beings, Motions, and Actions of his Creatures. *Say among the Heathen, that the Lord reigneth, let the Earth rejoyce, let the multitude of the Isles* (which are most subject to Tempests, Inundations, changes in the Air and State) *be glad thereof* (p). Be they never so much in danger, by reason of their insolent (in appearance) prosperous Enemies : Though their Advantages be great, their Contrivances subtil, their Designs cruel, their Endeavours vigorous ; though every one seem to be for them, and against his Servants : Though all look black and thick about them ; and nothing visible, but Bones exceeding dry, and scattered in the Valley ; though *Machiavel* himself projects and contrives, and *Achitophel* joyn in Counsel with him : Though *Senacherib* provides a formidable Host ; and *Rabshcchab* confidently taunt : Though the *Plot* be deep, and the Execution sudden, the Train laid, the Match lighted, the Obstacle removed : Though

(p) Psal. 96. 10. and 99. 1.

the

the Horse be prepared to the Battel ; and the Lot cast into the Lap, the end and disposal of all is of the Lord (q) He that is our God, is the God of Salvation (which is often the last stroak upon David's Harp) and unto God the Lord belong the issues from Death (r).

(4.) *The Foundation of his Rest is firm, and immovable.* He reposes his Soul upon the Rock of Ages. Having done every thing he can, or is obliged to do by his duty, he sits down under his shadow with great delight, and waits the success in Faith, and Hope ; with perfect resignation to his wife and just appointment in all things, who hath a particular care of those that place their trust, affiance, and acquiescence of mind in him : That support themselves against all fears, upon account of his All-sufficiency ; that he takes notice of their condition, is able to, and will order all for the best : That nothing befalls them without his knowledge ; his allowance of it, his being concerned for it. *For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro, throughout the whole Earth, to shew him-*

(q) Prov. 16. 33. and 21. 31. (r) Psal. 68. 20.

self

himself strong in the behalf of them, whose heart is perfect towards him (s). All his Saints are in his hand (t). He will keep the feet of his Saints (u). He draweth not his eye from the righteous (w). He hath as it were pickt and cull'd them out of the rest of the World, for his special Friends and Favourites: The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself (x), and will seasonably interpose for their succour in their greatest exigences: In the mount of the Lord, it shall be seen (y). To preserve them amidst all dangers and difficulties: When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee; and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee; and when thou walkest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee (z). None of them that trust in him (that lean upon him, that refer themselves to him) shall be desolate. But shall be as Mount Sion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the Mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his People, from

(s) 2 Chr. 16. 9. (t) Deut. 33. 3. (u) 1 Sam. 2. 9. (w) Job 36. 7. (x) Psal. 4. 3. (y) Gen. 22. 14. (z) Isa. 43. 2.

henceforth, even for ever (a). If the Bride-groom cannot cast off, neglect, disregard his beloved Spouse; nor the tender Father, his dear Children; nor a Man of Understanding, his Portion, his Jewels, his Friends, the beloved of his Soul; not willingly expose the tenderest part about him, *the Apple of his Eye*, to danger; God must always exercise a special Care for his people. *The name of the Lord is a strong Tower, the righteous runneth into it and is safe* (b). *They that be with us* (two Men only) *are more than they that be with them* (c). The whole *Militia* of Heaven is on their side (d), and *he that keepeth Israel, who neither slumbers nor sleeps* (e). And therefore when a Storm is towards, he familiarly invites them in, for shelter: quietly to repose themselves in his protecting Providence; excluding all diffident thoughts: As 'twere takes them by the hand, and conducts them into a place of safety, *Come my People, enter thou into thy Chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide*

(a) Psal. 34. 22 and 125. 1, 2. (b) Prov. 18. 10. (c) 2 Kings 6. 16. (d) Psal. 34. 7. Heb. 1. 14. (e) Psal. 121. 4.

thy self as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over-past (f). Where they shall be out of reach; as safe and secure, as in an impregnable well provided Fort, or place of Defence, and not fail of all Needfuls provided for them, He shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munition of Rocks; Bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure [g]. They who continually make God their defence, that trust to his protection; rely and cast themselves upon him for safety, shall find him a sure safe-guard: They are his particular Care and Charge, under his special Providence and Defence, secure from all hurt and danger: He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high, shall abide under the shadow of the almighty. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust [h]: An allusion to Fowls who hover over their young, running under, committing themselves to the defence of their Wings for safety, when danger threatens them; and they that would be safe under God's, must not only please

(f) Isa. 26. 20. [g] Isa. 33. 16. and 65. 13, 14. [h] Psa. 91. 1, 4.

them-

themselves with the general notion, that safety and protection is *there* to be had ; but make their refuge *there* ; put themselves *under the shadow of those Wings*, by their special Act and Deed : Deliberately chuse, and effectually place their last resort *there*. *Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most high, thy habitation ; there shall no evil befall thee, &c.* [i]. This gracious *special protection* over them in times of danger, is called, *hiding them in his pavilion ; in the secret of his presence ; in the secret of his tabernacle* [k], being *their shield and buckler* [l], *their rock and refuge ; an high tower, a resting-place, a shelter, a sanctuary unto them* [m], (a secret inviolable place of Retreat and Refuge, whereunto they may freely resort, and wherein they may safely, and quietly repose themselves) *setting them upon a rock* [n], *making an hedge about them* [o], *covering them in the shadow of his hand* [p], *suffering not their feet to be moved ; being their keeper, their shadow ; at their right*

[i] Psal. 91.9,10. [k] Psal. 27.5. and 31.20. [l] Psal. 91. 4. [m] Isa.8.14. Ez. 11.16. [n] Psal. 27 5. [o] Job 1.10. [p] Isa.51.16.

band, the rock of their salvation, [q]. Whatsoever, by tender *Affection, Art, or Nature*, can be a *security*, he is, and much more, to those that commit themselves to him for it. He loves us better than we love our selves; and better knows what is fit for our great Interest, our universal welfare; which is lodged more intimately in his heart, than it can be in ours, and which he hath engaged to prosecute. None of his faithful Servants can be produced, as an instance of Divine forgetfulness or neglect; whose just expectation he ever exposed to reproach. He so contrives, dispenses, orders all things, as his upright ones shall applaud his Faithfulness, Clemency, and Love at last: And find, *there hath not fail'd one word of all his good promises which he promised [r];* and that their complaints of *divine dereliction*, were repugnant to his *paternal Bowels and Relations [s].*

[5.] *His Sovereign is not worse than his Word, if he cut short his Natural, and give him Eternal Life: Consume his Cottage,*

[q] Psal. 66 9. and 16. 8. and 121. 5. and 95. 1. [r]
1 Kin 8. 56. [s] Isa. 49. 14, 16.

and take him to his own Palace. After all our difficult intricate passages through this Wilderness, we shall find them the right way to a *City of Habitation* [t], *that hath Foundations* [u] which others want to stand upon; and shall stand, when Heaven and Earth shall give their dying groan, crack asunder, become their own funeral pile: And, shall the *Garrison* yield, when *Relief* is at hand? The *Merchant* give up his Hope, within sight of *Harbour*? The *Husbandman* hang down his Head, when he sees the Field even white for Harvest? With what Joy, rather than Patience, would he go through all his Cost and Pains, were he sure every Corn would be a Crown? *Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward* [w], where no dismal Apprehensions, undelightful Prospects, or Aspects ever had place, *There* the black Regiment of Errors, Ignorance, and obscure Apprehensions, shall be disbanded. The Clouds upon our minds vanish, as the darkness of the Night is routed by the rising Sun. Those groundless scruples, which gravel tender hearts; and

[t] Psal. 107. 7. [u] Heb. 11. 10. [w] Heb. 10. 35.

whatsoever offends, shall be gathered out of *this Kingdom* [x]. Those laborious Controversies, wrangling Contentions, polemical Disputations, which sling this World into Estuations, have a final determination: And all subtil Distinctions, Equivocations, Evasions, swept away as a Refuge of Lies. There the meanest Understanding shall confute the Maxims of a whole *Sanhedrim* of *Rabbies*: And look down upon all the grandeur of humane Policies and Reasons of State, with as scornful an eye, as we now look up with, to the meanest Cob-web in our Windows. There all unruly Passions, impetuous Motions, and mutinous Commotions of Spirit, which dethron'd Judgment and Conscience in our Breast, are cashier'd, subdued, reduced to a Calm, eternally extinguish'd; and our hearts have a total, a final Circumcision, when this eighth day, and great *Sabbath* of the Saints is come. There the whole Body of bodily Distempers, Infirmities, whatsoever clogs us with Indispositions; or makes us heavy hearted, and dull spirited in holy Duties, shall be shaken off,

[x] Mat. 13. 41.

and

and pass away. We shall serve God then, without any lassitude, fainting, or tediousness; and rejoyce as a Giant to run our Race. Our Wills then, shall perfectly fall in with the Divine Will: And nothing seem *good* to us, but what is so in God's esteem. All that Legion of foul Spirits, with their Armory of Temptations, shall be confin'd for ever in their Chains of Darknes: The Prince of this World finally deposed, the Scene of his Temptations then ended; and he no more able to fasten a Temptation on a Saint in Glory, than a Man can now shoot an Arrow into the heart of the Sun. The *ground*, that now *lords it* over Men, is the Lordship, not the Man; that plows up his heart with careful Sollicitudes; casting its furrows, and wrinkles in his face; shall never give thorns, and thistles to his eyes more; but he shall be able to serve God, without any Vellications, Convulsions, Cramps, or Distractions, from the four fermentations of the Flesh and World. Saints have *there* on their Royal Apparel: Every Infant Grace, hath its adolescence into a perfect Man, and to the measure of the stature

ture of the fulness of Christ. *Here*, like poor Common Soldiers, some get one piece of Armour, others another; one is skill'd at this Weapon, another at that; *Job* gets an *Helmet of Patience*, *David* a *Girdle of Truth*, *Moses* a *Breast-plate of Meekness*, *St. Peter* a *Shield of Faith*; after they had been train'd up to the use of them in many Combats: But *there* every one hath put upon him the *whole Armour of Light*, not to fight, but triumph in; with *Palms in their hands*, absolute Peace, compleat Victory, a Crown incorruptible, that fadeth not away. There's no Worm in the fruit of that Paradise: No reflection upon sin or sorrow past with bitterness of Spirit; as now we have in our greatest Triumphs and Festivities, as the *Jews* in their Feasts of Tabernacles had their *Willows* among their *Palms*, while they remembered the dangers they passed in the Wilderness on their Festival Revolutions: But every review (if actual felicity can possibly give way to it) will only widen, and dilate the Soul for a more ample fruition of the present state. We shall *there* have an everlasting Avocation from unchristian

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Agitations, Wars, and Contentions of this present World. *Mesech*, and *Tubal*, with all their uncircumcised multitude, are gone down to Hell; and they have laid their *Swords* under their Heads; but their Iniquities shall be upon their Bones: Though they were the Terror of the Mighty in the Land of the Living, they shall be unable to amove a very Worm from feeding upon them. The most Valiant Attempts of high famed Mortals, and all the Arms, Ensigns, Patents, Titles (for we pronounce them too long) of Honour, shall be blazon'd alike in a Field Ardent, when the Heavens shall roul and shrivel up as a Scrole of Parchment before the Flame. When *Beauty*, that blossom of Flesh and Blood, which now carries so many Captives at her Wheels; tyrannizing over fond Mortal Affections, would be *there* no more comely than a dry Skull, in comparison of the ravishing Lustre that will be in the most deformed Body of the poorest *Lazarillo*; whose brightness will transcend the loveliest face more, than the rarest Jewel doth a vile piece of Jet. When all the Gold in the World shall be mel-

ted out of the Veins of the Earth, and Mens Coffers, into one common stream : And all Pearls and pretious Stones, lie as the Gravel on the side of that River, yet a silly Emblem, scarcely thought fit then to make a Metaphor of, for the very *pavement* of the *new Jerusalem* ; one sight whereof shall dim and deface all the Glory of the World. When we shall understand all the unintelligible dispensations of Providence, which now puzzle and amuse us : *Why that grand Cheat and Impostor* should so long delude, obtain, and prosper, where *the Lord of Glory*, and *his faithful Ambassadors* were crucified and slain : And the Sun of Righteousness lie so long under an Eclipse by Paganism and Idolatry. *Why a Church* so mischievous to her unfortunate Members ; stained and polluted with Blood and Blasphemy ; should have her Principles so greedily entertain'd ; not by the Vulgar only, but Capitals in Learning ; and be the Shambles of butcherly Cruelty to so many of Christ's Sheep. *Why* so many thousands sacrific'd to the ambition of one proud Mortal ; horrid Wickedness wanton it in Power , Grandeur, and Success, over Equity,

quity, Innocence, Virtue; scorn'd, oppress'd, and vilified upon this Stage of Grief and Misery. *When* all Knots shall be fully untied; all Mysteries unvail'd, all Intricacies of Providence unravelled; the just connexion of the least link in that great Chain, easily seen, in that Land of Vision, where all is clear, yet all amazing; and the unequal reflections made here, as if Justice slept, Divine Wisdom were careless, or put to a baffle, turned to admiring acknowledgments of that Care and Goodness that runs through all the Winds of Providence. *When* we shall see all Parties, of one Mind and Judgment, and hear all speak the same thing: When one Heaven shall be the proper Country of all its Inhabitants; and its Language equally understood by all, though redeemed from several Nations, and Kindred, and People, and Tongues. *When* we shall enjoy the happy Society of Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, (whose imaginary Reliques some go a weary Pilgrimage to see) with the Blessed Quire of Ministring Spirits, who have done us while we were in danger here, many an invisible Courtesie, which

we could never thank them for: Yea, our Christian Friends and Relations, to whom we have been instrumental in their new Birth, all crown'd in one day, with an everlasting Diadem of Bliss, which never shall decay. *Where* there shall be no Hypocrite to lose our love upon; which is now the great cooler of our Charity, and keeps our Affections in a greater Reserve. *When* triumphant Souls, shall see, admire, and celebrate that infinite Wisdom and Goodness, in those things they were too apt to complain of, and under, here; how necessary, useful for bringing them *thither*. And Oh! how will the Arches of Heaven echo, when Saints and Angels shall joyn in one common Quire, and heavenly Chorus, with their high sounding Cymbals; when they shall be joyful in Glory; and sing **aloud** upon their everlasting Beds of Rest, in most flourishing expretions, and **Anthems** upon the Divine Blessedness, and **Glory**.

Vol. 150. 5. and 149. 5.

Encouragement

Against the

Fear of Death.

1 Cor. 15. 55.

O Death, where is thy sting? &c.

OUR *whole Lives* are littlee nough
 to lay up for our *last hour*,
 to make ready for the coming
 of our Lord, that we may be
 found of him in peace [a], not only safe,
 but comfortable. Our Evidences clear,
 our Faith well exercised, our Promises
 ready, our Experiences at hand; that
 we may be able to honour our Principles,
 to stand upright then with undaunted

(a) 2 Pet. 3. 14.

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minds;

minds; to comfort our selves, and encourage others, to plead for God, to speak to the standers-by, of the long proof we have had of his being a good Master, a gracious Father to us; to commend the Mercifulness, Love, and Faithfulness of our Redeemer [b]. *Faith* is wrought by degrees to strength and perfection: To have it *to get*, when we should reduce it *to practice*, or, to put it to the hardest Tryal at first, is absurd and irrational. We now find it harder to depend upon God for our *daily Bread*; than for *eternal Life*; for, here our Faith is put upon a present Trial; but at Death, the strength of our Confidence is tried about the blessed Recompences; whether we can put our Souls into God's keeping; and send our Bodies to the Grave in hope. We need Armour of proof indeed for *that* great Conflict, to deal with the last Enemy, which tames the proudest Mortals, and astonishes the daring confident World, who are then dismay'd with guilt, and enfeebled with the hand-writing in their own Breasts. The Valiantest Conquerours, who with their sanguin Flags

[b] Jos. 23. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 12. and 4. 8.

strook terror into all Nations, were affrighted themselves at the displaying of the pale and wan Colours of Death: While those that could not look upon the violent Instruments of it in the hand of an Enemy, or encounter an Adversary abroad, have entertain'd the *King of Terrors* with great composure and sedateness of spirit; notwithstanding all that *Terror* cruel Men have cloathed it with.

As *Profaneness* hath not the advantage of Religion, in giving Protection against the Fear of Death, so it hath greatly the disadvantage in affording no relief. Sinners *suffer Death*, their *Souls* are *required* of them [c], torn from them by violent hands: While *good Mens* are not so much *taken from them*, as *yielded up*. Though they have *Life in patience*, they have *Death in desire*; not to avoid the Labours and Duties of their Calling; not out of impatience, distrust of God's Providence, discontent with our Condition, or weariness of Life; that because we see Labour and Sorrow in the World, are for staying no longer in it [d]: This argues Pride, Peevishness, Cowardliness, Slug-

[c] Luke 12.20. [d] Kings 19.4. Job 3. Jer. 20.14, &c.

gillness of Spirit, that we have a fancy for Heaven, only as a place of Retreat : But out of ardent Love to God and our Redeemer, with submission to his Will, to be with him, free from Sin and temptation to it. To serve God here, is our great Wisdom, and Interest ; to die when he pleases, God's great Mercy. *I have not so liv'd [saith St. Ambrose] that I am asham'd to live longer; nor yet fear I Death, because I have a good Lord.* 'Tis no harsh news, but welcome and desirable to them to hear of their *departure*[e]. With all alacrity they loose from the Shoar, and hoist up Sail for their own Country, where they may quietly enjoy the gain of their Adventure. 'Twere endless to instance how familiarly they have entertain'd Death, welcom'd it as their best Friend, caressed, courted, embraced the Instruments of it; how sweetly they have sung their Swan-like Song [f], and given their last fare-well : How many Tyrants have been more unable to invent cruel Deaths, than they to undergo them? In what a triumphant manner they have marched out of the Field of

[e] Phil. 1. 23. [f] Luke 2. 29.

this World with (as 'twere Colours flying, Drums beating) all imaginable instances of joy and gladness; insulting over Death, as more than Conquerours [g], trampling upon it, lying as it were at their mercy; offering Sacrifice for Victory over that Universal Monarch; having an Entrance ministred unto them abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ [h], taking up in a holy bravery that triumphant Song with the Apostle [i], *O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting, the wounding power of Death, the only thing that makes it terrible is sin, which renders us obnoxious to the Curse. The strength of sin, which gives it power to hurt us, is the Law that prohibits it. Death brings nothing with it to injure us, but what it finds in us, the desert of it [k]; but for guilt, it differs nothing from a calm Sleep. The Victory of the Grave is to be seen in Macpelah, Golgotha, Charnel-houses, Cæmiteries, Shrines, Tombs, Se-*

[g] Rom. 8. 37. [h] 2 Pet. 1. 11. [i] 1 Cor. 15. 55, etc. *A double Metaphor, the one taken from a Bee or Serpent that hath lost their Sting; the other from a Conquerour, that hath lost his Booty, or Prisoner.* [k] Rom. 6. 23.

pulchres, in all that ever Death Arrested, or had in Custody : *But thanks be to God who hath given us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ* : He hath taken away the *sting of Death* (put away sin) by the Sacrifice of himself [l], overcome the *pains of Death* by his Example and Promises [m], wiped away the *scandal of Death*, by enduring the shameful Death of the Cross [n], vanquish'd the *power of Death*, by his Resurrection as our Surety, the Mediator of our Peace, who having laid down a sufficient price; a publick Officer from Heaven is sent to open the Prison door [o]. Thereby proclaiming to all the World, that the debt was paid; that God had received full satisfaction for our sins, saying, *Deliver him, for I have found a ransom* [p]. Yea, *He rose* as the publick Head and Representative of all his People (who share in his Victories) as a pledge and part of the whole Harvest; *is become the first fruits of them that sleep* [q]; the exemplary Pattern, Assurance, and will be the Cause of their

i [l] Heb. 9. 26. [m] Psal. 23. 4. Isa. 53. 7. Heb. 2. 9, 10. 1. Pet. 4. 1. [n] Heb. 12. 2, 3. [o] Mat. 28. 2. [p] Job 33. 24. [q] 1. Cor. 15. 20.

Resurrection. When Christ arose, he virtually drew all his out of the Grave with him: Death it self became Mortal. The Head is not compleat (nor will be long) without the Members, who being so, cannot perish, *because I live, you shall live also* [r].

To be fearful then; and dejected at the approach of *Death*, is a diffidence of *his Redemption*, who hath in our nature and *stead* satisfied every demand of the broken Law; by his voluntary and meritorious obedience, and sufferings, answered the exaction, and endured the malediction of it; so mercifully provided against both the *hurt* and *dread* of *Death*: Forasmuch, then, as the Children are partakers of *flesh* and *blood*, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through *Death*, he might destroy him that had the power of *Death*, that is, the Devil. And deliver them who through the fear of *Death*, were all their lifetime subject to bondage [s]. *Death* now is ours, for our Advantage, contributory, subservient to our Happiness; put into the Inventory of our *Privileges*, which acco-

(r) John 14. 19. (s) Heb. 2. 14. 15.

crue to us by Christ [t]. He hath sanctified, sweetned, purchased it for us as properly as *Life: Changed its Nature*, of an *Enemy*, made it our real reconciled *Friend*, turned its horror and deformity; its frightful gastly Countenance, out of dislike, into a pleasing aspect. Is no longer a grim *Sergeant* to Arrest *us* as his Prisoners, whose Debts are paid, whose Pardon is granted, whose Prince's favour is obtain'd; but an officious *Servant*, comes to open the Prison door, to set us at liberty; to hold back the hanging of our House of Clay, while our Spirit enters into the Presence-Chamber of the great King: Waits on us till we have finished our work, then undresses, puts us (his Children) to Bed for a time, until Corruption put on Incorruption, and Mortality be swallowed up of Life. It cannot be *evil* to those, to whom *all things work together for good* [u]. Death hath lost its sting in the side of Christ, who by taking away our guilt, hath taken away the poison out of that Cup [w]. *The bitterness of Death is past*, embalmed to Believers; cloathed with such soft Lan-

(t) 1 Cor. 3. 22. (u) Rom. 8. 28. (w) Mat. 26. 39.

guage,

guage, that they may (as 'twere) scent a perfume, discover a beauty in it; represented under the comfortable notions of a *Decease* [x], a *departure* [y], an *absence from the body*, a *going home*, an *uncloathing*, a *putting off this Earthly Tabernacle* [z], an *entring into peace*, a *resting in their beds* [a]. Sickness rocks the Cradle, and Death lays them asleep in the Dust, as in a sacred Dormitory after a toilsom Pilgrimage. Is nothing else but a Writ of Ease to Christ's weary Servants; a perfect Sanctuary, where no disturbances, no avenger of Blood can arrest or molest us. This earthly House is pulled down only in order to raising it a more glorious Building; the immortal Inhabitant makes his escape, neither crush'd by its ruin, nor injur'd with its fall. The *Soul* and *Body* part only as two Friends at the Church door, when going each to his Seat till Sermon's ended, and then both meet again bettered. Their Death, their *Dust* is precious; in Christ's special Care and Custody; as precious Reliques never to be lost, Expectants in a silent, but as-

(x) 2 Pet. 1. 15. (y) 2 Tim. 4. 6. (z) 2 Cor. 5. 1, &c.
2 Pet. 1. 14. (a) Isa. 57. 2.

fured hopes of a joyful Resurrection. He preserves his Interest in them; his Relation to them, is the same still [b]. Death cuts the natural tye between Parents and Children, Man and Wife, Body and Soul, but not the mystical Union between Head and Members; no more than Sleep doth that between Soul and Body; which chains up the Senses for a time, *even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him* (c). Death perfects the mystical Union; in respect of the Body, doth not so much separate our Souls from our Bodies, as join them to Christ; nor so much end our Life, as our Mortality. The sleep of the Spouse breaks not the Marriage-knot between her and the Bridegroom (d). There's somewhat of (a Member of) Christ that lies in the Grave, of no less account with him, than those which walk up and down glorifying him in the World.

We may now well look up, and lift up our heads, for our Redemption draweth nigh (e). How beautiful are thy Feet O Death, which bring glad Tidings of

(b) Mat. 22. 31, 32. (c) 1 Thes. 4. 14. (d) Rom. 8. 38, 39. (e) Luke 21. 28.

great Joy ; that our Wilderiness-days are ended, our Military hardships accomplished, our sinning and suffering expired. We shall no more offend a good God, nor be offended by bad Men. There's no Serpent in that Paradise, no ill Neighbour, no breakings forth, no leading into Captivity, no complaining in the streets of the new *Jerusalem*. O happy change, I have so long waited for, expected, and desired ; Earth for Heaven ; a bloody Field, a continual Combat, for a place of Triumph, a Crown of Righteousness ; the House of my Pilgrimage and Banishment, for my own Country, my Father's House ; a Valley of Tears (where we cannot long keep dry eyes) ; for a place where all are wiped away ; Labour and Toil, Corruption and Mortality, for Rest and Peace, Incorruption and Immortality ; subjection to a sinning condition, for an impossibility of sinning ; unsatisfying fading Comforts, an Estate of Need and continual Want, for endless Pleasures, Fulness and all Plenty ; inferiour disturbing, unholy Company, for Saints, Angels, Royal Priests, Crowned Kings ; from all Perplexities and Uneasinesses, into the bosom

bosom of a sweet and quiet Repose. And, what oppressed Prisoner desires not freedom? What weather-beaten Traveller longs not for the Port? What Heir is unwilling to enter upon his Inheritance? What Labouring Man is afraid of a sweet Sleep? What loving Spouse dreads the Marriage Day? Or Prince, his Coronation? Who thinks much to put off his Cloaths, that they may be mended and made better against the Morning? Who is troubled when his sick Friend is laid down to Rest? Who takes on, when any of the Family is gone to Bed before him in the Evening? Who grieves to bid others good night? Or to pass sooner to be rich, honourable, at endless quiet? To escape those Storms others are fain to ride thorough? To take possession of his own blessedness and glory? The worst thing thou canst do to us, is the best thing that can be done for us. Thou housest us from every Storm, in the silent Grave, made fragrant ever since the Rose of *Sharon*, the Lilley of the Valleys lay in it. Thou art the great *Panacea*, Salve for all our Maladies and Distempers; for which we in vain here
com-

complain from Man to Man, for a little ease, though but for a little time. That *Infallible Physitian*, that cures us of all Diseases at once, and for ever; that frees us from *all Calamities*, Publick, National, or Personal; the Grave is **the** only piece of quiet earth Man can meet with: *There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest; there the prisoners rest together, they hear not the voice of the oppressor; the small and the great are there, and the servant is free from his master* (f). Every score shall be now blotted out; every debt cancell'd; we as fully, as freely acquitted and discharged; every *Canaanite* slain, every *Egyptian* drown'd; those Corruptions we have seen to day, we shall see them again no more, for ever. I shall no more question his love, or my everlasting rest. I shall now reap the fruit of all my hopes, and possess Glory above the life of Faith, I had before only in the promise, in the first-fruits: Every grace of the Spirit, is a spark of our future Glory, and every comfort of it, a drop of the Well of Life. Now is that Clay crumbling into

(f) Joh 3. 19, &c.

Dust,

Dust, which hindred my getting into the embraces of infinite love and sweetness. Now the day is come, the hour draws nigh indeed, wherein I shall be fetched home to my Father's House: He loves me too well, to suffer me longer from possessing that happy Inheritance I have gloried in; *whither the fore-runner is [for us] entered* (g). We have one that will be heard, and certainly prevail; our Cause will stand and prosper in his hand; we may now plead as general issue against any exception, the great Charter of the Gospel; and we may instance in this great Title of Grace, the state of Justification, the state of Adoption, the principle of Regeneration and Sanctification, all which we acknowledge we received from Christ, depending upon him, and they are sufficient for all our failings and imperfections.

Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit (h), I am thine, save me (i). When I lay in my blood (that was a time of love) thou saidst unto me, *Live*. Thou drewest me to consent to thy gracious Covenant, and thou swarest unto me, and I

(g) Heb. 6. 20. (h) Luke 23. 46. (i) Psal. 119. 94.

became

became thine (*k*). I stand to the Covenant that I made (though in much weakness) and would not change my Lord and Master for all the World. Thou wilt know and own, and receive *thine own*, who have owned thee, though I have sinned against thee. I fly unto, and lay hold on thy gracious promise, of which thou hast bid me put thee in remembrance, *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sin* (*l*). *I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more* (*m*).

What an unspeakable Encouragement is *our relation unto thee*? (O infinite condescending Mercy!) Thou wilt not shut out *thine own*; thou callest, esteamest us *thy Children* (*n*), *thy Friends* (*o*), *thy Spouse, thy Members* (*p*). The compassion thou hast put into Man; engages him to relieve a Neighbour, a Stranger, an Enemy; much more, to embrace a Friend; to entertain, to take in a Child, a Spouse, to be tender of part of himself: These dare trust themselves upon our

(*k*) Ez. 16. 8. (*l*) Isa. 43. 25, 26. (*m*) Jer. 31. 34. (*n*) 2 Cor. 6. 17, 18. (*o*) John 15. 14, 15. (*p*) Ephes. 5. 29, 30.

kindness and fidelity, and fear not that we will reject them in their distress, or destroy them though they sometimes offend us. Our Love deserves not the Name, is Cruelty and Hatred, in comparison of the Love of God, who is Love it self (*q*), and the God of Love (*r*).

The great Work was done *in the day of our Renovation*; we were *then* entred into the House-hold of God; made fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and received the Spirit of Adoption (*s*). Grace gives us the heavenly Birth and Nature; makes us Heirs; gives us Title, we shall now therefore have possession of an Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us (*t*).

He that hath given Grace, will give Glory, and with-hold no good thing. He gave me Life Eternal, when he gave me the knowledge of himself, and of his Son (*u*). Thou wilt not now take from me the Kingdom which thou gavest me, when thou receivedst me (once thy Enemy) into favour (*w*). But God com-

(*q*) 1 John 4.8, 16. (*r*) 2 Cor. 13.11. (*s*) Ep. 2.19. Gal. 4.6. (*t*) 1 Pet. 1.4. (*u*) John 17.3. (*w*) Heb. 12.28.

mendeth

mendeth his love towards us in that, while we were yet sinners Christ dyed for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God, through the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life (x).

The great impediments and causes of Fear are now removed. Unpardoned sin is taken away; our Debt discharged. We have a sufficient answer against all that can be alledged to the prejudice of our Souls. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that dyed; yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us (y).*

Thou wilt not deprive me of the Birth-right, who hast begotten me of the incorruptible Seed. Thou wouldst not have drawn me to thy self, received me by reconciling Grace, if thou wouldst not now have received me unto thy self. Thou hast sealed me up unto Salvation, and given me the earnest of the Spirit,

(x) Rom. 5. 8, &c. (y) Rom. 8. 33.

the

the witness in my self, that renewed Nature, those holy Desires and Delights, which can come from none but thee. Behold Lord *thy Mark, thy Seal, thine Earnest*; Flesh and Blood did not illuminate and renew me: The Spirit which thou hast given me, is my witness that I am thine (z). Thou wilt not disown or refuse the Soul that thou hast sealed; not keep me out, whom thou didst invite, and put upon the Wedding-garment. Thou redeemed'st, renewed'st, and hast hitherto preserved me; I had not come unto thee, except thou hadst drawn me (a). I had not loved, not minded, not desired after thee, if thou hadst not loved me first, and kindled those desires. It cannot be that thy Grace it self should be a deceit and misery, and intended but to deceive me: That thou shouldest set thy Servants Soul on longing for that which thou wilt never give him: The Water that thou hast given me shall spring up to everlasting Life (b).

Thou who hast engaged me to seek first thy Kingdom, art engaged to give it: Not to deny that Food that endureth

(z) Rom. 3. 16. (a) John 6. 44. (b) John. 4. 14.

to

to everlasting Life, to those that seek for that which perilheth not (c). Although my sins deserve thy Wrath, and nothing that I have done, deserves thy favour, yet *godlinesſ bath the promise of the life that is to come* (d). He that seeketh by thy help and encouragement, shall find (e). It cannot be that any should be disappointed that trust on thee; or have cause to repent of serving of thee; their labour shall not be in vain (f). Thou that hast saved me from Sin, and Satan, wilt save me from Hell. *If any Man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall also my Servant be* (g). Thou wilt crown thine own Graces; and with thy greatest Mercies, recompence and perfect the preparatory Mercies; and receive to thy Glory, those, who have been guided by thy Counsel (h).

Although I have forfeited my future Inheritance, and rendred my self liable to thy Wrath; thou hast appointed and accepted our Redemption (i). *Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness*

(c) John 6.27. (d) 1 Tim. 4.8. (e) Mat. 7.7. (f) 1 Cor. 15.58. (g) John 12.26. (h) Psal. 73.24. (i) 1 Cor. 1.30.

and peace have kissed each other (k). By our *Goel*, our *Redeemer*, of kin unto us, the excellency of his Person, and merit of his Satisfaction and Redemption, so full and compleat to answer the demands of thy Justice: In him thou art reconciled and well pleased.

I fall into his hands who hath justified me by his Blood. My Justifier will not condemn me: Nor deny me the Inheritance of which himself hath made me Heir; yea, a Joint-Heir with himself (*l*). *Lord Jesus receive my spirit (m), for thou hast redeemed it (n).* To whom can a departing Soul fly for refuge and entertainment, if not to thee that dyedst for *Souls*; and suffered *thine* to be separated from the flesh, that we might have all assurance of thy compassion unto *ours*? I come not unto an Enemy, but unto him that hath so dearly loved me, and bought me: And can *Love it self* reject me, that hath given himself for me? So often embraced me? Declared it self by such ample testimonies towards me?

(*k*) Psal. 85.10. (*l*) Rom. 8.17. (*m*) Acts 7.59. (*n*) Psal. 71.23. and 31.5. 1 Pet. 1.18, 19.

'Twas thy Errand into the World to save us from perishing (o). And thou art effectively *the Saviour of the Body* (p): And may we not trust thee in what thou hast undertaken, that trust *Man* if we judge him *faithful*? yea, thou art engaged by *Covenant* to receive us. *When we gave up our selves to thee, thou also becamest ours*; and we did it *on that Condition, that thou shouldest receive and save us*: And it was the Condition of thine own undertaking, thou drewest the *Covenant* thy self, and tendred it first to us; and assumed thy own Condition, when thou imposedst ours. I expect O my Saviour, but the performance of thy *Covenant*, and the discharge of thy undertaken Office. As thou hast caused me to believe in thee, to love thee, to serve thee, to perform the Condition thou hast laid upon me, though with many sinful failings, which thou hast pardoned; so now thou wilt let my Soul which hath trusted on thee, have the full experience of thy fidelity; and take me to thy self, according to thy *Covenant*; and *remember the word unto thy Servant, upon which*

(o) John 3. 16. (p) Ephes 5. 23.

thou hast caused me to hope (q). How many promises hast thou left us, that we shall not be forsaken by thee (r), but that we shall be with thee where thou art, that we may behold thy Glory (s)? For this cause art thou the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of Death for the Redemption of the Transgressions that were under the first Testament, they which are called might receive the promise of Eternal Inheritance (t), when we have done thy Will, we are to receive the Promise (u), 'tis thy (w), our Father's good pleasure to give us the Kingdom (x).

Thou art the common Refuge and Salvation of thy Servants; those that come unto thee, thou wilt in no wise cast out (y). There are now with thee the spirits of just Men made perfect, that were here as imperfect, as unworthy in themselves as I; and thou wert never unfaithful unto any that committed their Souls unto thee. O take me into their number, that we may together with E-

(q) Psal. 119. 49. (r) Heb. 13. 5. (s) John 17. 24. (t) Heb. 9. 15. (u) Heb. 10. 36. (w) John 20. 17. (x) Luke 12. 32. (y) John 6. 37.

ternal Joys, give Thanks and Praise to thee that hast redeemed us to God by thy own Blood (z).

Most gracious God, thou hast design'd thy own Everlasting Glory and good Pleasure in our Salvation: Our Redeemer must triumph in the perfection of his Conquest, of all his and our Enemies; and in the perfection of our Redemption. Thou wilt not lose thy Father's Glory, and thine own, that of all he hath given thee, thou shalt loose nothing, but should'st raise it up at the last day (a). I resign my Soul to thee, O Lord, who hast called, and chosen me, that thou mightest make known the riches of thy Glory on me, as a Vessel of Mercy prepared unto Glory (b). Thou hast predestinated me unto the Adoption of one of thy Children by Jesus Christ unto thy self, according to the good pleasure of thy Will to the praise of the glory of thy Grace, wherein thou hast made me accepted in the beloved (c). Who will now present me

(z) Rev. 5. 9. (a) John 6. 39. (b) Rom. 9. 23. (c) Ephes. 1. 5, 6.

faultless before the presence of his Glory, with exceeding Joy: To whom be Glory and Majesty, Dominion and Power, now and ever, *Amen.*

Jud. v. 24, 25.

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THE
Peace and Joy
OF THE
S O U L

Procured and Preserved.

Being A SECOND PART of the
Infalible Way to Contentment.
By the AUTHOR of the First.

— *And he went on his way Rejoycing,*
Acts 8. 39.

L O N D O N,
Printed for W. FREEMAN, at the
*Bible over-against the Middle-Temple-
Gate, in Fleet-street.*

Gene



TO THE
READER.

EVERY Wise Man *is for making his Life as easie as he can; and would they all meet together to Consult which way, they'd find none like that the upright Man is in already. They would agree with the wisest of them, that there's nothing better under the Sun, than to be Merry and Rejoyce; * and yet, that there's no solid, durable Joy to be found in Sensual Pleasures, or Secular Enjoyments; much less in any sinful ones: For, to enjoy these, Men are*

* Eccles. 2. 24. &c. & 3. 12, 13, 22. & 5. 18, &c. & 8. 15, & 9 7.

TO THE READER.

forc'd to run from themselves, under the shelter and refuge of Atheism, to take those Principles as an opiate to procure a Dulness and Lethargy of Mind, to still their affrighting Apprehensions, which so startles, scares and terrifies them: To banish from them (O foolish People and unwise!) the Thoughts of God, the only Fountain of everlasting Satisfaction and Delight, to those that place their Happiness in him; in being, and doing good. Which is the only way to Procure and Preserve (what all Men desire) the Peace and Joy of the Soul. For after all Endeavours and Experiments, no abiding Comfort will be found, but in a virtuous Life. Not that the Pleasures of Religion are felt alike by all; but, the sincere Practice of it, is the only way to find Rest to our Souls: And the steady Bent and Tenor of our Hearts and Lives, is a surer ground of Comfort, than our Souls ravished with sensible Joys, (which we may be mistaken in.) Our Saviour admitted but Three Disciples to his glorious Transfiguration; one only lay in

To the READER.

in his Bosom; yet all, except a notorious Traytour, dearly Beloved by him, and sit with him in his Throne: as all shall who Believe in him through their word. Among the Tryals some of them meet with, is a Melancholy Constitution; not (as falsely Charged) the Fault of Religion, nor theirs neither, so they strive to Reddise it, give not way to it, stir up themselves against it; If the Iron be blunt, put to the more strength. They are not answerable for the mere Effects of it, but Considered by him who knoweth our Frame, remembers that and all other Bodily Distempers and Disadvantages we pass through here. This I declare (saith an eminent Man) to every sincere Person so continuing, he is always safe. The uncheerful Temper the Author formerly hath been liable to, and of late sometimes found two or three of his Acquaintance in, moved him to Collect and put together the following Lines, which had not Increased the Croud of Books, if any in it (as he thought) so suitable for them as this. If it advantage them

To the READER.

only, *he bath* his End, *though it serve*
no other.

The Prayers at the End hereof are (as
our Saviour directs us in his) to be daily
used by us, for all others that are in a like
Condition with our selves.

T H E

THE

Peace and Joy

OF THE

S O U L

Procured and Preserved

CHAP. I.

My dear Friends,

WE can never sufficiently adore the Goodness of God, in making the Conditions of our everlasting undisturbed Rest, so effectual for our present Comfort. While we serve, we please him; we ease and

M 4 gratifie

gratifie our own Minds; are made Partakers of the Divine Nature, by imitating the Divine Perfections, in Goodness, Righteousness and Truth, and so become acceptable to him, and our selves too. Notwithstanding the rude Treatment *Religion* finds from an ungrateful World, there's nothing on Earth so conducive to our Satisfaction and Delight in it, as *making that our Business*: And therefore, *to procure and preserve the Peace and Joy of our Souls,*

In the first Place; let us *discard every evil Thing*, and so keep our selves in the Love of God (a) by doing that which is well-pleasing in his sight. Sincerity is the only way to assure, and secure us in the Divine Favour, and to free us from all doubts concerning it. *The work of Righteousness shall be Peace, and the effect of Righteousness, Quietness and Assurance for Ever (b).* The Primitive Christians were never troubled with Writing or Reading Cases of Conscience; being true to their own, maintain'd their Joy in a world of trouble; so that they were but as sorrowful, yet always rejoy-

(a) Jud. v. 21. (b) Isa. 32. 17.

cing—

cing.— as *having nothing, and yet possessing all things* (c). The straight way to Heaven is very plain and pleasant; Joy and gladness shall be found therein, *thanksgiving and the voice of melody* (d). But Men may thank themselves for mis-giving Fears in forbidden, dark, or doubtful paths. It's not *Religion*, but *the want of it*, or superstitious mistakes about it, that disquiets Minds. An honest innocent Man knows the punishments the Laws of his Country denounces against Thieves, Murderers, or the like Offenders, without being terrified, or dismayed at them. *Great peace have they which love thy Law: and nothing shall offend them* (e). *Be glad in the Lord, and rejoyce ye righteous, and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart* (f).

(2.) The good state of the *Body* is no small advantage to the *Mind*. Let us therefore *use the abilities and assistances God hath given us for our Health*; under a grateful Sense, that we, and all the accidents and uneasiness of our *Sickness*,

(c) 2 Cor. 6. 10. (d) Isa. 51. 3. (e) Psal. 119. 165. (f) Psal. 32. 11.

are in his hands who errs not in bringing about his gracious purposes for the good of our Souls or Bodies; even by others Errors and Oversights, as well as by their Care and Kindness. To be peevish with our Disease, Medicines, Food, Attendance; fretful and uneasie on every little mistake, error, slowness, or forgetfulness; when things are not done as, or when we would; to make *Burdens* which are not *too heavy* (by Divine Assistance) to be born, at present *Intolerable*, by pusillanimous, anxious fears and mistrusts of what they may be in a little time; renders us troublesome to our selves, and others; deprives us of that Composedness, Quiet, Peace and Comfort, which is the result of Patience, Resignation, hope in God, and a thankful sense of all his past and present **Undeserved Mercies**, *They cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee, O Lord my God: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered (g).*

(3.) *Avoid Solitariness, and being unemployed.*

(g) Psal. 40. 5.

Retire-

Retirement, to melancholy Constitutions, is the Food and Element of Discontent, where no joy was ever found; suitable Society rouses and revives the dull and cloudy, the listless and unactive; cheers and refreshes the disconsolate Soul; *Iron sharpeneth Iron, so a Man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend (b)*; chaces away those sullen, black, and dismal Imaginations, which are such Enemies to, and hinder us from maintaining a constant chearfulness of Heart, and lightfomness of Spirit, so advantagious, so well-becoming us in our Pilgrimage. *Good Company* animate and encourage one another in most dismal times, divert from sad and melancholy Musings, exhilarate the drooping Spirit, lift up the Hands that hang down, and the feeble knees; have had their Hearts burn within them, as they walkt together and were sad, whilst talking of our Redeemer, who hath done so much for us, is coming to take us to himself, and so shall we be ever with the Lord, wherefore com-

(b) Prov. 27. 17.

are in his hands who errs not in bringing about his gracious purposes for the good of our Souls or Bodies; even by others Errors and Oversights, as well as by their Care and Kindness. To be peevish with our Disease, Medicines, Food, Attendance; fretful and uneasie on every little mistake, error, slowness, or forgetfulness; when things are not done as, or when we would; to make *Burdens* which are not *too heavy* (by Divine Assistance) to be born, at present *Intolerable*, by pusillanimous, anxious fears and mistrusts of what they may be in a little time; renders us troublesome to our selves, and others; deprives us of that Composedness, Quiet, Peace and Comfort, which is the result of Patience, Resignation, hope in God, and a thankful sense of all his past and present **Undeserved Mercies**, *They cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee, O Lord my God: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered (g).*

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(b) Prov. 27. 17.

fort one another with these words (*i.*)

Idleness is one of the most tedious irksome things in the World; racking *the Soul* with melancholy Conceits, with troublesome distracting Amusements; starving it for want of satisfactory Entertainment; causing it to feed on its own heart, by doleful Considerations; infesting it with crowds of stinging Thoughts; gauling it with the Sense of shameful Sloth and Laziness. Every one should consider *the World* as the *Family* of that great *House-keeper*, of whom the whole Family of Heaven and Earth is named (*k*). And *himself* as an *Officer* or *Servant* placed by God in his *Station*, to conser in his order and way (or rather in God's, wherein he hath set him) somewhat towards a Provision for the maintenance of himself, and Fellow-Servants. And when we are busily engaged, seriously intent on honest Employments, our Minds are prepossess'd, and have no room or vacancy for frivolous pensive Imaginations. A sedulous Application to Business, cheers the Spi-

(*i*) Mal. 3. 13, &c. Luk. 24. 13, &c. 1 Thess. 4. 14, &c. (*k*) Eph. 3. 15.

rit with wholesome Diversion, with pleasant Entertainment; quickens, inflames our Activity; diverts us from the Sense of Pain, and anxious Perplexities; preserves the vigour of our Minds, and Health of our Bodies; from a dull Listlessness, a heavy Unweildiness seizing on us. *Industry* hath an innate Satisfaction, which tempereth all Annoyances; redeems us from the molestations of Idleness, that lies on others hands as a pestering Incumbrance; even ingratiates the Pains going with it; delighting us, that we are not squandering away precious Time; not burying, or abusing, but using the Opportunities, Abilities, and Advantages he hath given us for our selves, and him that needeth; whereas, he that doth not *Earn*, can hardly *own his own Bread*, and in *St. Paul's* judgment, should be debarr'd of Food (*l*).

(4.) Let's endeavour to *keep our selves in a calm, serene, even state*, which is the State of Peace; and upon any breach of it, without the least delay, return to it again, through him who is the great Mediator between God and Man. When

(*l*.) 2 Theff. 3. 10, &c.

we

we would *have*, or *do* any thing, let's stand exactly *even* and *indifferent* as to the *Event*, that whatsoever *that* be, our *Happiness* may be the same, even as if we had desir'd nothing at all: Without being transported on account of any good or bad Success, be it what it will. Avoiding all Dissatisfaction, Sorrow, Fear, and Anger, Peevishness, and immoderate Care, Heaviness, Grudging, and Complaints, with all occasions of them. Inuring our selves to bear Repulses, Abuses, Injuries, Contempts, Scoffs, Reproaches, Slanders, Losses, Crosses; those Calamities, which are so grievous Discontents to others, with composed, sedate, unconcerned Minds; diverting, refreshing, recreating *them* by contrary pleasing Objects. Not dwelling upon melancholy Prospects, sad Remembrances, and recitals of our Miseries; but on the *best*, *most pleasing part* of our *Condition*. Eying, not those above, but below us, not him in the *Chair*, but those that carry *it*: Not what we *want*, but *enjoy*, and *others* are *without*: What God hath done, and provided for us. Let our Thoughts, our
Hearts

Hearts be where we profess our Treasure, our Country is: Let our Blessedness, our Reward, (which it's possible to make sure of, and Christ hath told us how) [m] be always rolling in our Minds, and we shall have a perpetual Antidote against all dejection, which is fed by disobedience and unbelief. *While we look not at the things that are seen, but the things which are not seen; Ours appear light Afflictions, and but for a moment, and working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory (n).* It's too much pondering on this World makes our Minds uneasy, which if imploy'd on Divine Objects (alone capable of satisfying our immortal Appetites) would support and comfort us, when nothing else could (o). And therefore, let's think as little as may be on *things below*, and not at all on *any thing that's apt to make us sad*; which the Prophet owns his fault, and for which he chides his Soul, and *chases away with delightful Thoughts of God* (his Goodness, Grace and Mercy) and *Psalms of Praise (p)*.

[m] Mat. 5. 3, &c. (n) 2 Cor. 4. 16, &c.
(o) Psal. 119. 92. (p) Psal. 43. & 77.

And

And so should we, frequently raising up our Souls in pious Ejaculations; saying continually, *the Lord be magnified; Blessed be God* (q). In our Devotion exercising Acts of Resignation, and Expressions of our Trust and Confidence in him, (the most effectual way to obtain it.) *But thou O Lord art a shield for me, my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength in whom I will trust; my Buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. For in the time of trouble, he shall hide me in his pavilion, in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me, he shall set me up upon a Rock* (r). And therefore,

(5.) Let nothing make us stagger, or be able to shake our stedfast trust and confidence in God; his promises to us, his providence over us, doing what we are able

(q) Psal. 35. 27. & 40. 16. (r) Psal. 3. 3. & 18. 2. & 27. 1, 3, 5.

for our own *Salvation, Relief and Safety*, and then humbly, and faithfully recommending, and intirely delivering up our selves, Souls, and Bodies, and all our concerns into his hands; under a quiet composure of Mind, that *he takes care of us, will make good his word unto us*. Mankind in general are invited to depend continually upon him, from the care he takes of all his Creatures, his whole Family. But there's moreover, not only his particular Love, but *his multiplied Promises* to his Children; to those devoted to his Service. And he'll sooner dissolve the whole frame of Nature, than *break his word*, which he never hath done, nor never can.

And what would Men give upon the Brink, to be *sure of Pardon*? Good Men are *as sure of it*, as of *their own sincerity*, as of the word of God. And, *As I live saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel* (s)? *Wash ye, make ye clean, put*

(s) Ezck. 33. 11.

away

away the evil of your doings. Cease to do evil, learn to do well, (saith the Lord.) Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool (t). When the wicked Man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive (v). Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon (w). Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth (x). Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (y). And therefore sent his Son to be the Saviour of the World. And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (z). Who gave himself a ransom for all (a). Tasted death for every man (b). Became the author of eternal salvation un-

(t) Isa. 1. 16, &c. (v) Ezek. 18. 27. (w) Isa. 55. 7. (x) 1 Tim. 2. 4. (y) 2 Pet. 3. 9. (z) 1 John 4. 14. & 2. 2. (a) 1 Tim. 2. 6. (b) Heb. 2. 9. (c) Heb. 5. 9.

to all them that obey him (c). For, the Lord hath laid unto him the iniquity of us all; He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed (d). Herein God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, without strength, Christ died for us, for the ungodly (e). And the Blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin (f). Then, who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God; who also maketh intercession for us (g). Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them (h). So that whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy (i). For, if we confess our sins, he is faithful (having promised) and just, (Christ having satisfied) to forgive

(d) Isa. 53. 5, 6. (e) Rom. 5. 6, 8. (f) 1 John 1. 7. (g) Rom. 8. 33, 34. (h) Heb. 7. 25. (i) Prov. 28. 13.

us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (k).

And, he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all how shall he not with him also freely give us all things (l)? Without question he will, who so dearly loved us. By our incredulity we dispute the goodness and veracity, the Truth and Faithfulness of God. For every unworthy distrust of him a good Man reproves himself; as arguing, great Ignorance, or little Faith. They are our Saviour's own words, therefore can never possibly deceive us, *Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you (m)*. That is, as himself explains it, *all these things* which our heavenly Father knoweth we have need of. And sure then, we have little temptation to fear want, when we are assur'd of all needful things; it may perhaps be an equal mercy to secure us from great abundance, and from necessary sufferings no mercy, but a diskindness. The Psalmist thankfully acknowledges Affli-

(k) 1 John 1. 9. (l) Rom. 8. 32. (m) Mat. 6. 33.

tions among the great Blessings of his life (n). And our Saviour enjoins us to rejoyce and be exceeding glad, instead of being cast down under them (o): And concludes it a great reflection on the Divine Providence, and his constant followers, to be diffident of his fatherly goodness to us, who are his off-spring (p); and who hath implanted such a tender care and kindness in natural Parents to their's (q). He's the best judge of all Men's necessities; and appoints or permits nothing, but what's for our welfare, benefit, advantage; in right reason, all things considered, best for us; and what we should be sure to wish, if we rightly understood our own Case. Making it our business to please him, if we affect not to lay it on thick; squander not away our provision; be satisfied with what Nature desires, and what infinite Wisdom and Goodness appoints; we shall have so much as is necessary to support us in our Beings; not only enough to keep Life and Soul to-

(n) Psal. 119. 71, 75. *(o)* Mat. 5. 11, 12.
(p) Acts 17. 28. *(q)* Isa. 49. 15. Mat. 6. 31, 32. & 7. 11.

gether, but a sufficient competency for industrious, moderate, frugal Persons ; and while we're sure of thus much, we must blame our selves only, if we be unhappy for what's not really needful for us.

The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee : for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee (r). When, and as best, keeping them from, supporting them under, delivering them out of all their troubles.

And now having brought our selves to a *stedfast dependance upon God* ; we shall find, we have laid the surest Foundation for our own Comfort and Happiness, in this World, and that which is to come ; of such unspeakable advantage is *this excellent duty* to all that are rightly exercised therein. It's the best recommendation to the Divine Blessing and Protection ; the best antidote against cares and fears ; the best support under all pressures and calamities ; the best preparation against the Preva-

(r.) Psal. 9. 9. 10.

lency

lency of those temptations, whereby the diffident and distrustful of God's Providence, are sure to be overcome. This necessarily disposes us to take no thought for the morrow: To forbear tormenting our selves with direful Expectations of what may happen hereafter: Banishes, chases away all doubtful Apprehensions; lays us in a pleasing, delightful repose: Enables us to bid defiance to whatsoever threatens us; and not to be ruffled, or discompos'd at any inconveniences we meet with here. This is that compleat Security, that perfect Safety and Satisfaction mention'd by the *Prophet*, as annexed to a steady Reliance upon God, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stay'd on thee*; (and for this very reason) *because he trusteth in thee* (s).

(6.) *Serious and devout Prayer*, is the way to compose our Thoughts, to calm our Passions, to refresh our Spirits, to spiritualize and raise our Affections, to strengthen our Faith, quicken our Hope, inflame our Love; to obtain the Divine Assistance, to discharge our Minds (un-

(s) Isa. 26. 3.

less

less we are very Hypocritical in our Devotion) of all Cares and Fears : Provided we implore him with clean Hearts and Hands ; from a full Perswasion, and firm Belief, of his gracious Promises, and Christs powerful Intercession ; as our great Duty, and a means to obtain what we want. A careless, customary Performance of it, breeds trouble afterwards, for not discharging it as we ought ; or an Insensibility, and deadness in our Souls, without any Warmth, Life, or Comfort. Being therefore, not only constant, but very solemn, and affectionate in our Devotion, with all our might, fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord, pouring out our Souls unto God our exceeding Joy (t), we may go away in peace, with our Countenance no more sad, (v), knowing, *He hath heard us* (w). *He beareth us always* (x). *Is nigh unto us in all we call upon him for* (y). *The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in*

(t) Psal. 43. 4. (v) 1 Sam. 1. 15, &c. (w) Psal. 65. 2. & 34. 6. (x) Psal. 66. 18, 19. John 9. 31. & 11. 41, 42. (y) Deut. 4. 7.

truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him, he also will hear their cry, and will save them (z). The eyes of all wait upon him, and he giveth them their meat in due season. He openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing, provideth for (Birds, and Beasts of Prey) the raven his food, when his young ones cry unto God. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God (a). He heareth the prayer of the righteous (b). His eyes are upon them, and his ear open to their cry (c). Whatsoever we ask, we receive of him (d). And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us (e). Every one that asketh receiveth (f). And therefore, if any of you lack wisdom, (or any thing pertaining to Life and Godliness) let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him (g). There's a natural Hope,

(z) Psal. 145. 18, 19. (a) Job 31. 41. Psal. 104. 21, 25, 27. & 145. 15, 16. (b) Prov. 15. 29. Eca. 5. 16. (c) Psal. 34. 15, 17. (d) 1 John 3. 21, 22. (e) 1 John 5. 14, 15. (f) Mat. 7. 8. (g) Jam. 1. 5.

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good Men have in God, that he will hear and help them. Themselves will do all the good they can, for those that ask them. But this Property of *Goodness*, is most perfect in God, who is perfect and infinite in *Goodness*. If ye *then* (as our Saviour teaches us to argue) *being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven, give good things to them that ask him (h)?* But these natural Notions we have, that God is good, ready to forgive, heareth prayer, plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon him (i), are confirm'd by his express word, his multiplied promises; that he saith not to the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain (k). And call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee (l.) Before they call I will answer, and whilst they are yet speaking, I will hear (m). Ask, and it shall be given you. All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive. Whatsoever he shall ask the fa-

(h) Mat. 7. 11. (i) Psal. 65. 2. &c 86. 5.
 (k) Isa. 45. 19. (l) Psal 50. 15. (m) Isa. 65. 24.

ther in my name, he will give it you, faith our Saviour (n). And for this purpose he appears for us at the right hand of God, to offer up our Prayers, and to make Intercession for us (o). Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, (for pardon) and find grace to help, (and strengthen us) in time of need (p).

(7.) That we may be careful, (anxious, thoughtful, solicitous,) for nothing; to our Prayers and Supplications unto God, we must joyn thanksgiving. Under a grateful Resentment, and thankful Acknowledgment of his marvellous loving Kindness, in Condescending to, humbly beseeching, and stedfastly believing that he will take care of us. This is the most effectual way to commit our ways (or, in other words) to cast our Burden, and all our care upon him (q). There's no better remedy against all perplexing Thoughts for the

(n) Mat. 7. 7. & 21. 22. John 15. 7. & 16. 23.
(o) John 14. 16. & 16. 26. Rom. 8. 34. Rev. 8. 3.
(p.) Heb. 4. 16. (q) Phil. 4. 6. Psal. 37. 5. & 55. 22.

future, than that sensible Experience we have had already of his good Providence towards us. It being impossible to have a grateful Sense, and a solicitous Distrust of his Goodness at the same time.

It becomes us therefore to procure and maintain perpetually such a deep sense of all his mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful: in no wise suffering any regret to disturb our Praise, to quench our Joy in God, in his Divine Excellencies, and their Beneficialness to us. *Singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord (r).* Composes, refreshes disordered Minds; as *David's* Harp, chases away the troubled Spirit, from molested Souls. *It is (then) a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most high: To shew forth thy loving kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night (s). I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: The humble shall hear thereof and be glad.*

(r) Eph. 5. 19. (s) Psal. 92. 1, 2.

O mag-

O magnifie the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together (t). Every day will I bless thee, and I will praise thy name for ever and ever. I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praises unto my God, while I have my being. My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities: Who healeth all thy diseases. Who redeemeth thy life from destruction: who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies (v).

(8.) Let us frequently, with attention and close application of mind, read and observe the holy scriptures. Making them our Counsellor, our Comforter, our Treasure, our Study, our Delight, our Meditation Day and Night; we shall esteem the words of his mouth, more than our necessary Food, sweeter than Honey, and the Honey-comb: Above Gold, yea than much fine Gold: Bet-

(t) Psal. 34. 1, 2, 3. (v) Psal. 103. 1, 2, 3, 4. & 104. 34. & 145. 2. & 146. 2.

ter unto us than thousands of Gold and Silver (w). We shall then not envy, but pity any who have the greatest Insight into Arts, Sciences, *Histories*, and neglect *this*, so *Ancient*, that it takes rise from the first point of Time; beginning with the Original of the whole Universe. So *True*, as attested by its very Enemies, and our own experience. So *Comprehensive*, that it informs us in all things necessary to be known, the chief Good, and Happiness of this World and the next; with the *right path* that infallibly leads to it; and such Motives and Encouragements to keep us *in it*, as to which nothing can be added.

Where can we find *such satisfying entertainment as here*? To see in the *new Testament*, the accomplishments of so many Types, Rites, Ceremonies, Sacrifices, Prophecies, Promises, of the *Old*. The Glory of infinite Wisdom. The Harmony of the Divine Attributes in the Contrivance, and Accomplishment of our Redemption: his Justice satis-

(w) Job 23. 12. Psal. 1. 2. & 19. 8. & 119. 24, 50, 72, 99, 127.

fied, without diminution to his Mercy; and his Mercy, without intrenching on his Justice: His Holiness most eminent in his Indignation against Sin, and his Love in sparing Sinners.

Such strange variety of Memorable remarkable Occurrences, heroick Actions, undaunted firmness of Mind, under, and in sight of suffering, before Kings and Judges of the Earth; such excellent Discourses; well couch'd Parables; variety of Events; the Deliverances and Punishments, Lives and Ends of the Righteous, and the Wicked, wherewith it abounds; at once instructing, and encouraging with a delightful Admiration. What Divine Eloquence? What moving Rhetorick? What melting Strains? What endearing Expressions, and Instances of the greatest Tenderness and Love, to reconcile us at once, to *God* and our selves? To draw and win us to our Duty and Happiness: Who hath so many Titles to us; and by whose meer Bounty we live: Engaging to reward our Obedience, which he might, upon the utmost Penalty exact; and will, if

we will, enable us to perform. What moving Examples of Uprightness and Integrity, fervent Prayer and Charity; unshaken Faith and Constancy; intire Submission and Resignation to God's Will; Patience, Contentedness, Joyfulness under Sufferings. *Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my Pilgrimage (x).*

A Book that means us so much good; design'd only to make us happy; gives us the truest Judgment of all worldly, and eternal Things; speaks not at our meer vain Rate, but for the most important Ends; tending more to the Reputation, Health, and Harmony of Mankind, than all the Sayings of the Sages upon Earth. That great Magazine, and Store-house of Health, Help and Comfort: That hath so much in it to cure Heaviness, to extirpate Grief, to lay asleep our troublesome Thoughts and Passions; to raise and satisfy our drooping doubting Spirits, when our Feet are well nigh slipt; to administer relief under all Wrongs and Injuries to support us under all the Adversities of

(x) Psal. 119. 54.

Life,

Life, and Terrors of Death. How many precious Promises for all things pertaining to Life and Godliness, are scattered through it, to fill us with all Joy and Peace in believing! That sets before us, how to be delivered from Impurity and Inquietude: To free our selves from the Tyranny of those Lusts, Appetites, Passions, which so agitate and turmoil our Souls: How to recover our Liberty and Freedom from the vilest Bondage, by his holy Spirit, upon our asking *Grace*; and fresh Supplies of *it*, upon our good improving *it*. That shews us our Enemies, and their snares laid before us for our Lives: Fortifies our Faith; excites our Courage; assists, furnishes us with the whole Armour of God; animates our Souls, by assuring us, that if we will not basely surrender our selves, we can never be overcome; if we but stand our Ground, keep close to its Conduct, follow our Leader, who hath spoiled Principalities and Powers, we cannot miss of Victory, of a Crown of Life, for being kind to our selves, willing to be happy here.

A Book that takes in, the Care of our secular Concerns. *A quiet Life*; keeping us out of the way of many Misfortunes which turbulent, unruly Spirits meet with, by *living peaceably with all Men*: Puts us into the fairest road to *Riches*; by a *diligent Hand*, and *the Blessing of God*. How to preserve our *Reputation*; by *providing things honest in the sight of all Men*. To make our *Enemies at peace with us*; by having our ways please the Lord. How to secure an *unconcerned Mind*, and all we really want, by *relying on him*. Fixing us in all Vicissitudes, by satisfying us, who Rules, in whose Hands we are. *Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoycing of my heart* (y).

(9.) Let not the consolations of God be small unto us, which he hath given us in his word. Not Customarily thinking on, but ruminating, digesting of them; expatiating our closest Thoughts upon them. Amongst so many, we'll here instance but in one, which we would not be without for all the

(y) Psal. 119. 111.

World.

World. We know that all things work together for good, to them that love God (2). A most comfortable Truth. For (1.) this gives us *security* where there's most need of it, *i. e.* against the Causes of Fear and Sorrow, *i. e.* The Evils of this Life. (2.) The *Universality* of the Expression, makes our Comfort and Security equal to our Dangers: The *number* of them cannot dismay us, where, without Exception to *any* one, Provision is made against *all*: where the remedy will not fail, not only, if *any* one, *but*, if *every* one of them should happen, that we are liable to. (3.) It's an equal Antidote against the dread, and feeling of Sorrow. Suffering not our Present Enjoyments to be imbittered with Fear of the future; and supplies to us with Hope and Patience when Evils are present. That Belief which supports us under present Evils, will not let us feel Disturbance from the Possibility of future ones.

(2) Rom. 8. 28.

There

There being a Concurrence of our Endeavours, the Grace of God will not be wanting; for if any thing that's grievous befall us by his Providence, he will not deny us that inward Assistance of his Spirit towards a good Use of it, which is needful; because the outward means of doing us good, is not of *our own* chusing, but his. Whilst we unalterably resolve not to forfeit our Interest in his special Grace and Providence, for obtaining any worldly Good, or avoiding any worldly Evil. For, when without *Sin*, we cannot avoid *Suffering*, he'll turn it to a *greater Good*; because it plainly appears to be *his will*, that we should *suffer*. So that, *to do evil, for a good End*, is not only *damnable* (a), but *foolish* (b), to obtain that which may be for our hurt, or prevent that which may be for our Good. And is also a dishonouring God, by distrusting his Providence, which is in nothing more concern'd, than in seeing that in the Event no Man shall be a loser by doing his Duty. Laying this as a sure Foundation for us to

(a) Rom. 3. 8. (b) Deut. 4. 6. 1 Sam. 13. 13.

build upon; that, though our Affairs go never so contrary to us, its best things should be as God will have them; who in chusing *our Condition* hath still a regard to *what is best for us*? So that, we may not only conclude in General, that it's good for us that we are afflicted, that he in faithfulness afflicts us (*c*), but particularly, that *that* Affliction we are under is more for our good, than any other would have been, not only Adversity in general, but those that happen to us in particular.

And now, were it left to us, whether we would have an assured *interest in this Promise*, and that Grace and Providence of God, which will make it Good; or, from Time to Time have the Disposal of our selves. Would we trust our selves in our own Hand, who should undo our selves, even with desiring hurtful Things; and take our selves out of God's, who will make all things that are not good in themselves work together for good?

(*c*) Psal. 119. 71, 75.

And,

And, can we wish any thing more for the quieting our Minds, the giving us a profound and lasting Peace, than to know that future Evils will as certainly work for our Good, as if they were present? And that though they are supposed and uncertain, yet the good is certain, upon supposition that the Evil happens? To reap all the Comfort of present Enjoyments; and to be able to account upon Adversity, without Disturbance? We know they are uncertain, and that while they last, they shall work for our Good, and when they fail, they shall do so too. And is not this a mighty Advantage, to *know*, and be *assured* of this? And what can be wanting to an *absolute Assurance* of it, but that *we love God*? And *this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments* (d).

(d) 1 John 5. 3.

C H A P. II.

TH E Sensual World entertain strange Thoughts of *Religion*; as if it were a fullen, lumpish, melancholy Thing; void of all Mirth and Pleasure: Requiring a dull, heavy, morose kind of Life; full of Hardship and Severity. That it's a lamentable way to our promised Land; through a solitary, disconsolate Wilderness; barren of every thing to gratifie and delight; and that eateth up the Inhabitants with bitter Remorse. Whereas, *it alone*, is the never-failing Source of true, pure, steady, substantial, constant Joy: Such as is deeply rooted in the Heart; immoveably founded on the Reason of Things; permanent, like the immortal Spirit wherein it dwells, and the eternal Object, on which it's fix'd. Permits us not be one moment sad; banishes the least Fit of Melancholy: Allows, obliges, commands us in all times,

times, upon all occasions *to Rejoyce*. And what can any Soul desire more, than to be always in good Humour, in a chearful Frame? To lead a Life in continual Alacrity? Who would not embrace so pleasant a Duty, as Pleasure it self? Who would affect a Sin, which hath nothing in it but Disease, and Disgust? Tempered with regret; easily dash'd by cross accident; soon declining into a nauseous Satiety; in the end degenerating into Grief, and biting Anguish. *Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and at the end of that mirth is heaviness (e).*

How can we sufficiently magnifie the transcendent Goodness of God, that he *enjoins Joy, and prohibits Sadness*: Makes our Duty, to be our Delight; and our Sorrow, to be our Sin. Adapting his Holy Will, to our principal Instinct: Would have us resemble him in a constant state of Happiness; hath provided for us Joy and Pleasure here, and at his right Hand for evermore: Ordered the whole frame of our Religion, in a

(e) Prov. 14. 13.

tendency to procure Joy in those that embrace it.

Must it not be very entertaining, to contemplate the infinite Wisdom, Power, Bounty of God in the Creation? In raising this great, this magnificent Pile, producing so beautiful a Structure, so goodly a Frame: Furnishing every part of it, with such variety of Creatures, so exquisitely fitted for the Use and Service of themselves, and one another? So copious a Store-house of things, with a special Regard to *our* Sustentation, Accommodation, Delight. And, with the same Almighty Hand, vigilant Care, benign Regard, upholding, governing, maintaining the same? To observe the conspicuous Strokes and Tracts of infinite Wisdom: The miraculous Demonstrations of the Divine Hand; the stupendious Efforts of its Power; the signal Triumphs of Providence, his glorious Perfections so illustriously shining forth, (who is the principal of our Love, our Reverence, our Confidence; to the conviction of Infidelity, confirmation of our Faith, cherishing of our Hope, encouraging
our

our Obedience) spreading and renewing a Table where all may reach. His Benefits to Mankind particularly, so plentifully dispensed. Renewing the Donation of our Being every moment, by preserving it. While we are spending the Production of one Year, preparing for us against another. Placing us as spectators in this noble Theatre, the World, to view and applaud those Scenes of Earth and Heaven, the workmanship of his Hands. *O Lord, how manifold are thy works ! In wisdom hast thou made them all : the earth is full of thy riches : so is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping, innumerable, both small and great, &c. (f).*

He might have made *the Earth*, a place of our perpetual Suffering; a kind of *Hell* unto us. Submitted us here to continual Misery; shut up from us all Springs of Pleasure and Delight; turned all our fair Days, into so many sad and dismal Nights; given us *Eyes* for nothing, but frightful Aspects, or to be fill'd with Tears; and *Ears* to receive no sound but that of his Judgments; a *taste* for nothing but Bitterness; a

(f) Psal. 104. & 145. 15, 16.

touch

touch to be sensible of nothing but Pain : He might have mingled all our Feasts with Gall ; inclosed every taking Object with Briars and Thorns to pierce us through at coming near them. But behold, among how many comforts hath he placed us, and given us Liberty and Ability to enjoy, who deserve not the meanest Competency of the common Benefits all Men partake of, and without which we cannot subsist ? Whom strict Justice would often cast into utter Disconsolateness ? Not only our Enjoyments, but the Capacity to enjoy them, is his Bounty. Behold, the Goods he hath given us, offers to us, hath put into our Reach ! Yea, he hath made us capable of, faithfully offers to us, the greatest, immense, all-comprehending good, *himself*, the Fountain of all Joy and Bliss, to be fully enjoyed by us : In having *whom*, we virtually and in effect have *all things* : Becoming thereby, in the highest degree, rich, honourable, happy. *We will be glad and rejoyce in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine : the upright love thee (g).*

(g.) Can. 1. 4.

What

What is *the Gospel*, but good tidings of great Joy? Doth he not represent himself therein, as the God of Love, of Hope, of Peace, of all Consolation? Hath he not sent down from Heaven his only begotten Son, to assume our Nature, to satisfie for our Sins? Hath he not rescu'd us from endless misery? Purchased Pardon, Peace, eternal Salvation? Promised the Comforter to abide with us for ever? Is he not now sitting in glorious Exaltation at God's right Hand? Governing the World for his Church's Benefit? Interceding as our merciful, faithful High-Priest, for our Forgiveness and Acceptance? for Supply of our Necessities; Relief of our Distresses; Assistance of our Weakness; that we may be able to overcome fleshly Lusts, inordinate Passions, strong Temptations, our Selves, the World, Principalities and Powers; *to do all things* (incumbent on us) *through him that strengtheneth us (h)*. For what doth he call us to him? But that he may give rest unto our Souls; wipe away all Tears from our Eyes; save us from

(h) Phil. 4. 13.

most

most woful Despair; settle us in a blessed Hope; that we may enter into our Master's Joy; that our Hearts may rejoyce; that our Joy may be full, that no Man taketh from us? *The kingdom of God* consists in Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost (*i*). *The fruits* (sprouting from the root of Christian Life) *of the Spirit*, are Love, Joy, Peace (*k*). Our Lord pronounces a special Beatitude, to the Practice of every Virtue (*l*). Each Grace (Humility, Meekness Patience, &c.) have a peculiar Delight annexed to it: No pious Exercise, no good Deed, can be performed without Satisfaction. And if we scan all the Doctrines, Precepts, Promises of Christianity, each appear pregnant with matter of Joy, each yield great Reason, strong Obligation to rejoyce always. How many Declarations importing a joyful Satisfaction, granted to the Observers of God's Commandments? That, *in keeping them there's great reward*. That, *light is sown for the righteous, and glad-*

(*i*) Rom. 14. 17. (*k*) Gal. 5. 22. (*l*) Mat. 5.

ness for the upright in heart (m).

What a warm and vigorous Influence must a Religious Heart feel from fixing his *Love*, (the sweetest, most delectable of all Passions) on the most amiable, desirable Object, that uncreated Beauty, that supream, all-sufficient Good? whose Nature is *Love*; who prevented us with *it*, when we were Enemies; will embrace us when we are become his Friends: Not deny his Love to a Soul wholly devoted to him, desiring nothing so much, as to serve and please him; not disdain his own Image, nor the heart wherein it is engraven: Who can never be absent from us; opening our Eyes, we every where behold the Appearances of his Presence and Glory; the Traces of the Divine Nature and Perfections discovered in every thing we see, and converse with him whom our Soul loveth. It's not the Colour, the comeliness of Faces, or Proportion, but we see, or apprehend some Excellency, Goodness, Sweetness of Nature and Disposition, that charms our Spirits,

(m) Psal. 19. 11. & 97. 11.

com-

commands our Love, even of them we never saw: Their Perfections are not obvious to the sight of our Eyes; we can only discern the Signs and Effects of them. We cannot but discern that Almighty Power, Wisdom, - Goodness, which fills the Universe; Displays it self in all the Parts of the Creation; establishes the frame of Nature; turns the mighty Wheel of Providence; and keeps the World from Disorder and Confusion, who is the only true Cause of all our Comfort from every Creature: That alone Acts in us, and causes all our grateful Sensations; wherewith we're truly affected. All the good we ever enjoy'd, or can expect, being derived from his pure Bounty. Every thing else in Competition with him, being Pitiful, Mean, Ugly, Loathsom: All things without him, vain, unprofitable, hurtful to us. *Let them that love thy name, be joyful in thee (n).*

What a happy Complexion, chearful Disposition, is there in *charity to Man!* which rids us of those gloomy,

(n) Psal. 5. 11.

keen,

keen, turbulent Imaginations, uncharitable Affections, that cloud our Minds, frets our Hearts, discomposes the frame of our Souls ; and consequently settles our Minds in an even Temper, sedate Humour, harmonious Order ; in that pleasant state of Tranquility, which naturally results from the Voidance of irregular Passions.

What Glory, what Triumph, what Satisfaction is there, in *forgiving Injuries* ? Whereby we discharge our Souls from those vexatious Inmates, those black Thoughts, of burning Anger, stormy Contentions, gnawing Envy, rankling Spite, raking Suspicion : Clear our selves from the troubles attending Feuds, Strife, distracting Animosities : Render our selves capable of Divine Mercy : Acquire a Title to our own Forgiveness.

What more Excellent, Noble, Generous ; what Sweetness and Delight, in a Soul that feels it self enlarged to embrace all Mankind ? Whose Wishes and Desires are levelled at the Good and Welfare of the Universe ; that considers every Man's Interest as his own ;
over-

over-looks their Ingratitude, Malice, Injuries; pities their Follies; overcomes their evil with good: Is so far from entertaining any base, or injurious Thought, that he had rather suffer a thousand Wrongs, than be guilty of one: Never designs any other revenge against his most malicious Enemies, than to put all the Obligations he can upon them, whether they will or no.

How great a Joy is there in lessening the Inconveniences of Mankind? In removing the Troubles, encreasing the Satisfactions, abating the Wants, easing the Pains, allaying the Sorrows of one another; succouring those that are overtaken with any Calamity, in any wise doing good? whereby we feed good Humour gratifie our best Inclinations; endear our Brethren; mollifie, oblige our Enemies; resemble the Divine Goodness; attract the Divine Favour. Who can out of Charity give Alms, or shew Mercy without chearfulness? Seeing, he thereby satisfies his own Mind, eases his own Bowels, receives more good to him-
O self,

self, than he doth to his Neighbour (so that, properly speaking, the Receivers are the Benefactors) discharges a Duty acceptable to God, obliges him to requite, abundantly to reward his slender Beneficence: So well pleasing to our Saviour, that he hath engaged his word, under the Figure of the good Samaritan, — *Whatsoever thou spendest more (upon him) when I come again: I will repay thee (o).*

How unconfinedly, inexhaustibly vast, is that Delight which a charitable Complacency in the good of our Neighbour (a rejoycing with those that rejoyce, &c.) affords? We thence ingrossing all the good in the World; appropriating to our selves all the prosperous Successes; all the pleasant Entertainments; all the comfortable Satisfaction of our Neighbour. Had I my Choice of all things that might tend to my present Felicity, next to the Love and Enjoyment of God, I would pitch upon this, to have my heart possessed with the greatest kind-

(o) Luke 10. 35.

ness,

ness towards all Men in the World. This would make me partake in all their Happiness: Their inward Endowments, and outward Prosperity; every thing that benefitted, or advantaged them, would afford me comfort and delight.

Yea, the Soul, even by a charitable Sympathy, or Condolence in our Neighbour's Adversity, is (not destitute of Delight) thereby melted into a gentle Temper, susceptible of the best Impressions. We share in the Comforts we Minister to others: are refreshed in that kindly Submission to God's good Pleasure; in that lightsome Contemplation of God's Mercy; in these comfortable Hopes of a happy Issue, which we suggest to the afflicted; we thence are disposed to a grateful Sense of God's Goodness, in preserving ourselves from those Calamities, and qualifying us to comfort our Brethren. We feel Satisfaction in reflecting upon this very Practice, and observing that we do Act conformable to good Nature, to the Dictates of Reason, to the Will of God: Therein discharging

a good Conscience, and enjoying a Portion of that continual Feast.

What Joy results to a Christian, from having an universal Complaisance in God's Proceedings as grateful? Relishing all Dispensations; as dispos'd to bless and praise him for all things incident, (Joy being an inseparable Companion of Gratitude and Praise,) as finding Satisfaction in Poverty, Disgrace, any Distress. To have his Spirit above grievous Solitude, Anxiety, Desperation, Disconsolateness. To apprehend himself the Child of a most kind and careful Father; that hath all things in Heaven and Earth at his Disposal? Is infinitely tender of his good; so assured he can never come into any want of what's needful for him: And hath a Title to Goods infinitely more desirable, precious, durable? How can he but patiently submit to his fatherly Chastisements, which he is unwillingly forced by his own great Love, and our present pressing need to inflict, impose upon us? Cheerfully undergo Affliction, with the same Mind as herewith a Patient swallows down
an

an unfavoury Potion he knows will conduce to his Health? How doth our holy Confidence in his paternal Care over us, exhilarate our Hearts? that all our Concerns are lodg'd in the Hands of such a Friend; so wise, able, faithful, affectionate; that in due time, in the most expedient manner, we shall receive a competent Supply of our wants, a Riddance from all our Dangers, Harms and Grievances. — *In the shadow of thy wings will I rejoyce (p).*

Can any thing give such Ease to Humane Life, as to have wholly resign'd our selves, and all our Concerns unto him? Let things be, and go how they will, our Heart, our Happiness is not concern'd in it. We depend upon God for every thing; so are satisfied with any thing, or Condition; which should not be thus, were it not best for us. To have an Agreeableness of Will with the Will of God, makes it as impossible any evil, as that, that which is according to our Will, should makes us sad.

(p) Psal. 63. 7.

Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness (q). What are the Trials of the Righteous, to the *many sorrows that shall be*, that are *to the wicked (r).* What's Poverty (which grates a little on the Senses and Fancy) to the want of a good Conscience? Sickness, compared to a distempered Mind, and Decay of Spiritual Strength? Any Disappointment, to the being defeated, and overthrown by a Temptation? What's any Loss, to the being deprived of God's Love and Favour? or any Disgrace, to the being out of Esteem and Respect with him? What's any Unfaithfulness, or Inconstancy of Friends, to the having deserted, or betrayed our own Souls? What can any Danger signifie, to that of eternal Misery incurr'd by offending him? What Pressure can weigh against the load of Guilt? or what Pain equal that of stinging Remorse? What Condition can be so bad, as that of a wretched Sinner? Any Case surely is tolerable, desirable, lovely, in comparison of this.

(q) Psal. 112. 4. (r) Psal. 32. 10.

What

What *Pleasure* (without any *Tincture* of Sourness, Bitterness, melancholy Damps, consequent Qualms) to enjoy Hearty, Pure, Solid, Durable, the only true *ones*; such as are at God's Right Hand; the best Friend, the continual Feast of a *good Conscience*, (is his Prerogative to be Master of) that purest Delight, that richest Cordial, that universal sovereign Balm, that brazen Wall, that impregnable Fortress (against external Assaults, and internal Commotions) that constant Repast, whereon the Mind, destitute of all others, with a never languishing Appetite, entertains it self; that faithful Witness, impartial Judge, whosoever accuses, always acquits; that only Support in old Age, in the evil Day; that certain never deserting, never-failing Friend; that undecaying, unalterable, lasting, everlasting Satisfaction; that sure Refuge in all storms of Fortune, which renders his Sleep sweet; (undisturb'd with fearful Phantasms) his Heart light, his Steps secure; arms him with invincible Courage; bears him up Chearfully, Undauntedly, Tri-
O 4 umphantly,

umphantly, against all malicious Reports and Disgraces, the worst bad Fortunes : being certain he's in the right way ; not doubting he shall in good time come to his designed Journey's End. *Keep innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right for that shall bring a man peace at the last (s).*

Is he not freed from Diffidence in himself? From Distraction in his Mind? From frequently being on the Rack? From leading an unequal Life, clashing with it self? From deluding, disappointing those he deals, converses with? being in all Cases, Conditions, (prosperous or adverse) the same Mind, and Man, going the same way. Contingencies of Affairs, unhinge not his Mind from his good Purposes : Divert not his Foot from the right way. Let the Weather be fair, or foul : The World frown, or smile : Let him get or lose, be favoured or crossed ; commended or reproached, (by Honour or Dishonour, by evil Report, and good Report,) he will do his Duty : The

(s) Psal. 37. 38. *Old Translation.*

external

external State of Things alter not with him, the Moral Reason of them.

A hopeful Confidence, a chearful Satisfaction, ever waits him in this right way. Nothing within him to controul, countermand, distract, disturb him. Nothing without, to dismay, discourage him. If he has not the good Will of Men, he cannot hugely dread their Opposition. He may strongly presume upon the propitious Aspect, the favourable Succour of Heaven; which always smiles, and casts a benign Influence on honest Undertakings. He can with Assurance commend his ways to God's Providence; depend upon him for his concurrent Benediction: With an humble Boldness address Prayers to him for his Protection: Refer his cause to the severest Consideration; with *Job*, saying, *Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity* (t). Whatsoever befalls, howsoever the Business goes, he shall not condemn, not punish himself with Re-

(t) *Job* 31. 6.

morse: But triumph in the Integrity of his Heart (if not in the Felicity of his Success) and Innocency of his Deportment. — *Till I die, I will not remove my integrity from me, my righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live (v).* His Mind is not surprized, or his Passions discompos'd, by a seeming Adverseness of Events to his Endeavours. He's assured, *missing*, is better than *getting*, when by sovereign Wisdom it's so determin'd. So, in effect he can have no bad Success: For, how can that Occurrence be deemed *Bad*, which plain Reason dictates in certain Judgment to be most expedient for him; about which he ever was indifferent, and with which at present he's not heartily displeas'd? How can it be taken for Misfortune, which one was prepar'd to embrace with Satisfaction and Complacency? So, let the worst that can come, he comes not off ill; or so, (matters being rightly stated) as to be a loser upon the foot of the Account.

(v) Job 27. 5, 6.

Must

Must not *upright walking* yield perpetual Joy? Being attested to, approved by the sacred Oracles, by remarkable Providences, by the general Consent of all wise and good Men; by Experience; that all our Good and Happiness, absolutely depends on God's Favour; that to please him, can only be true Wisdom, the surest Safety; to offend him the greatest Folly, Hazard, Danger. That Virtue is the best Endowment, Sin the worst Mischief: A bad Mind the worst Adversity can befall us. That no worldly Good or Evil, are considerable to those Spiritual. That nothing can be really profitable, advantageous to us, which consists not with our Duty to God; conduces not to our Spiritual Interest, our eternal Welfare; but is a frivolous Trifle, a dangerous Snare, a notable Damage, or a woful Bane unto us.

Is there no Comfort in being satisfied, that all the Causes of Sorrow are removed, and all the Causes of true Joy secured? To be *certain* we are in a safe State of Salvation? To *know* we are passed from Death to Life: That

That the Seeds of all saving Graces, the Foundation of all saving Comforts, are firmly laid in our Souls? That we have the Marks, Dispositions, Affections, are intitled to all the Privileges of Children of the Blessed. To see our selves guarded here by the *Almighty Attendance*, and afterwards carry'd by *them* into *Abraham's Bosom* (w). To lie down (and not be afraid) as in the everlasting Arms of the Watchman of *Israel*; and when we awake, to be still with him, satisfied with his likeness (x). *The Lord will command his loving kindness in the day-time, and in the night his song shall be with me* (y).

Is it not a mighty reward even in this Life, of a holy and devout Life, to be secure of our main Stake, our final State? And from all Ill, Sin, Guilt, Satan, the World, the Flesh, Death and Hell; the most horrid, formidable, gastly, only dangerous Enemies? To have our Hearts not condemn, but commend, and applaud us? To have a perpetual Calm, (be the World never so

(w) Psal. 91. 11, 12. Luke 16. 22. (x) Psal. 17. 15. & 139. 18. (y) Psal. 42. 8.

unquiet) a constant Peace of Mind, and Sense of the Divine Favour? To have all our Sins pardon'd, all our Debts paid, all our Iniquities forgiven? No old Scores, no after-Reckoning to perplex, disturb, shame us, make our Countenance fall before him. All Occasions of Displeasure, Distances removed; being reconciled through our Saviours powerful Mediation. To have *confidence towards God*; Freedom, Liberty, Assurance in Speaking, in putting up our Prayers to him, without Fear of a Repulse, or a Denial: To come with such a holy Boldness, and Confidence in our Requests, as those have, who are sure to be heard (2).

What Thought can enter into the Heart of Man more comfortable and delightful, than this? That the World's Sovereign, the great Master of all Things, the most Wise, and mighty King of Heaven and Earth, hath entertained a gracious Regard, hath express'd a real Kindness unto us? That we are in Capacity to Honour, Praise,

(2) Heb. 4. 16. 1 John 5. 14.

present an acceptable Sacrifice unto him, who can render us perfectly Happy? That we are admitted to the Practice of that, wherein the supream Joy of Paradise, the Perfection of Angelical Bliss, the most delectable Business of Heaven consists?

Wherefore, a *Christian*, as *such* (according to the Design of his Religion, and in Proportion to his Compliance with its Precepts) is the most chearful Person in the World: Always in Humour, and full of Chear: continually bearing a sprightly, elevated, well-satisfy'd Content of Mind, (which springs from Innocency of Life, a faithful Discharge of our Duty, Satisfaction of Conscience, Acquiescence in our Estate, a good Hope in God, our Selves, and our future State) a light Heart, a calm Spirit, a smooth Brow, a serene Countenance, a grateful accent of Speech, a well-composed Tenure of Carriage. Exhibiting triumphant Demonstrations of Satisfaction and Alacrity: Every way signifying his extream Complacency in God, his Dealings with him: The full Content
he

he takes in his Estate ; as gratefully sensible of his Felicity in his Favour ; boasting in God all the Day long ; and in a sort commending himself as very happy in Relation to him ; with a sober Confidence, and chearful Insult, upon vile, odious, baffled *Impiety*. By his Expressions and Demeanour, upbraiding the Folly, the Baseness, the Impotency, the Wretchedness of it ; in comparison with the Wisdom, in opposition to the Power of God, his Friend and Patron. *All the upright in heart shall glory (a) ;* no black Thought, no irksom Desire, no troublesome Passion lodges in his Breast. Any Furrow, any Cloud, any Frown sits ill on his Brow. Any doleful Complaint, sounds ill out of his Mouth. The least, dum-pish Aspect, fretful Word, or froward Behaviour, utterly unbecomes him. If at any time it appears otherwise, 'tis a Defection from his Character ; a Blemish, a Wrong to his Profession ; It argues a Prevarication in his Judgment, or Practice : He forgets that he is a

(a) Psal. 64. 10.

Christian, or hath not preserv'd the Innocency belonging to *that Name*: For, if a Christian remembers what he is; is sensible of his Condition, reflects on the Dignity of his Person, the Nobleness of his Relations, the Sublimity of his Priviledges, the Greatness of his Hope, the Certainty of his State, how can he lament, or be out of Humour?

Is it not absurd for him that is at Peace with God, his own Conscience, all the World; for the Possessor of the best Goods, the Heir of a blessed Immortality, the Friend, Favourite, Son of the great King, to Fret or Wail? What Account can be given, that he that's settled in a most prosperous State, that's (if he please) sure of its Continuance, and Improvement? That hath the inexhaustible Spring of good for his Portion: His Welfare intrusted in most sure Hands; God's infallible Word for his Security and Support, free Access to Him, in whose Presence is Fulness of Joy; frequent Tastes of his Goodness, (in gracious Dispensations of his Providence, Intercourses of Devotion, Influence

fluence of his Grace, chearing the Heart with his lightsome Presence, and ravishing Consolations) the infinite Beauty and Excellency, for the perpetual Object of his Contemplation and Affection: That enjoys the Serenity of a sound Mind, a pure Heart, a quiet Conscience, a sure Hope; What can he want to refresh, or comfort him?

Whence can Sorrow come? How can Sadness creep into him, that is a true, a perfect Christian: That hath no care to distract him, having discharged all his Concerns on God's Providence. No Fear to dismay him, being guarded by the Almighty Protection from all Danger and Mischief. No Despair to sink him, having a sure Refuge in the Divine Mercy and Help. No superstitious Terrours or Scruples to perplex him, being conscious of his own upright Intentions to please God, and confident of God's merciful Willingness to accept his sincere Endeavours. No incurable Remorse to torment him; the String of Guilt is pull'd out by his Saviour's Merits, apply'd by

by his Faith and Repentance. No longing Desires to disquiet him, being fully satisfied with what he possesses, or may justly expect from God's Bounty. No Contentions to inflame him, knowing nothing's here worth passionately striving for ; and being resolv'd to hold a friendly good Will towards all Men. No repining Envy, seeing none more happy than he may be ; and that every Man's good by Charity, is made his own. No fretful Discontent, seeing he gladly acquiesces in all Successes allotted him ; resigning his Will to God's ; taking all for best, which thence occurs : Knowing all shall work together for his Good and Advantage. No spiteful Rancour to corrode his Heart. No boisterous Passions to ruffle his Mind. No inordinate Appetites, perverse Humours, corrupt Designs, to distemper his Soul, or disturb his Life.

What is there belonging to a Christian whence Grief naturally can Spring ? From God, our exceeding Joy ; the Fountain of Happiness and all Comfort ? From Heaven, the Region of
Light

Light and Bliss? From his Law, which inlightens, cheers, rejoyces the Heart, is sweeter than Honey, or the Honey-Comb? From Wisdom, whose ways are Pleasantness, and all her Paths Peace? From the Contemplation of Heavenly Truth? From the Sense of his Favour? From the Pardon of our Sins? From the Influences, the Effects of Divine Grace? From the Hopes and Anticipation of everlasting Bliss. From Virtue, which cures our afflictive Distempers, composes our vexatious Passions? From those sweet Sources, about which a Christian (as such) is only conversant, no Sorrow can be derived, no bitter Stream Flow. But Hell, the Flesh, the World, Darknes, Error, Folly, Sin, Irreligion, (Things with which a Christian hath nothing to do; from which he keeps aloof; which he utterly Renounces and Abandons) they only are the Parents of Discomfort and Anguish.

Wherefore, there's the same Reason, Obligation, Possibility, that we should rejoyce always, as that we should always be Christians; exactly performing

304 **The Peace and Joy, &c.**

ing Duty, totally forbearing Sin. For, *Innocence*, and *Indolence*; perfect *Virtue*, and constant *Alacrity*, ever go together, are inseparable Companions, and constitute *Happiness*.

PRAYERS

PRAYERS

FOR

Procuring and Preserving

THE

Peace and Joy of the Soul.

A Ssist us mercifully, O Lord, in these our Supplications and Prayers; and dispose the way of thy Servants towards the Attainment of Everlasting Salvation, that among all the Changes and Chances of this mortal Life, we may ever be defended by thy most gracious and ready Help, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

Al-

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all Things, Judge of all Men; we acknowledge and bewail our manifold Sins and Wickedness, which we from Time to Time most grievously have committed, by Thought, Word and Deed, against thy Divine Majesty, provoking most justly thy Wrath and Indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our Mis-doings, the Remembrance of them is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable. Have Mercy upon us, have mercy mercy upon us most Merciful Father, for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ sake, forgive us all that is past, and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of Life, to the Honour and Glory of thy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

O God Merciful Father, that despisest not the sighing of a contrite Heart, nor the Desire of such as be sorrowful, mercifully assist our Prayers
that

that we make before thee in all our Troubles and Adversities; whensoever they oppress us; and graciously hear us, that those Evils which the Craft and Subtilty of the Devil, or Man worketh against us, be brought to nought, and by the Providence of thy Goodness they may be dispersed, that we thy Servants being hurt by no Trials or Temptations, Persecutions or Afflictions; may evermore give Thanks unto thee in thy holy Church, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

WE humbly beseech thee, O Father, mercifully to look upon our Infirmities, and for the Glory of thy Name, turn from us all those Evils, that we most righteously have deserved: and grant, that in all our Trouble, we may put our whole Trust and Confidence in thy Mercy, and evermore serve thee in Holiness and Pureness of Living, to thy Honour and Glory, through our only Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ, *Amen.*

O God,

O God, from whom all holy Desires, all good Counsels, and all just Works do proceed ; give unto thy Servants that Peace which the World cannot give, that both our Hearts may may be set to obey thy Commandments, and also, that by thee we being defended from the Fear of our Enemies, may pass our Time in Rest and Quietness, through the Merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour, *Amen.*

O God, who art the Author of Peace, and Lover of Concord, in Knowledge of whom standeth our eternal Life, whose Service is perfect Freedom ; defend us thy humble Servants in all Assaults of our Enemies, that we surely trusting in thy Defence, may not fear the Power of any Adversaries, through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

LORD of all Power and Might, who art the Author and Giver of all good Things ; graft in our Hearts the Love of thy Name, encrease in us
true

true Religion, nourish us with all Goodness, and of thy great mercy keep us in the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

O Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly Wills and Affections of sinful Men; grant unto thy People that they may love the Thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise, that so among the sundry and manifold Changes of the World, our Hearts may surely there be fixed, where true Joys are to be found, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

A Almighty and everlasting God, who dost govern all Things in Heaven and Earth; mercifully hear the Supplications of thy People, and grant us thy Peace all the Days of our Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

O God, who knowest us to be set
in the midst of so many and
P great

great Dangers, that by reason of the Frailty of our Nature we cannot always stand upright, grant to us such Strength and Protection, as may support us in all Dangers, and carry us through all Temptations, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

Almighty and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our Infirmities, and in all our Dangers and Necessities, stretch forth thy right Hand to help and defend us, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

Almighty God, who seest that we have no Power of our selves to help our selves; keep us both outwardly in our Bodies, and inwardly in our Souls, that we may be defended from all Adversities which may happen to the Body, and from all evil Thoughts which may assault and hurt the Soul, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

We

WE beseech thee Almighty God,
mercifully to look upon thy
People ; that by thy great Goodness
they may be governed and preserved
evermore both in Body and Soul, thro'
Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

Almighty God, who through thy
only Begotten Son Jesus Christ
hast overcome Death, and opened unto
us the Gate of Everlasting Life ; we
humbly beseech thee, that as by thy spe-
cial Grace preventing us, thou dost
put into our Minds good Desires, so
by thy continual Help, we may bring
the same to good Effect, through Jesus
Christ our Lord, who liveth and
reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost
ever one God, World without End,
Amen.

O Lord, from whom all good
Things do come, grant to us
thy humble Servants, that by thy holy
Inspiration we may think those things
P 2 that

that be good, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same, through Jesus Christ, *Amen.*

O God, who didst teach the hearts of thy faithful People, by sending to them the Light of thy Holy Spirit; grant us by the same Spirit to have a right Judgment in all Things, and evermore to rejoyce in his holy Comfort, through the Merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour, *Amen.*

O Lord, who never failest to help and govern them whom thou dost bring up in thy stedfast Fear and Love; keep us we beseech thee under the Protection of thy good Providence, and make us to have a perpetual Fear and Love of thy Holy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

O Lord, we beseech thee mercifully to hear us, and grant that we to whom thou hast given an hearty Desire to Pray, may by thy mighty Aid be defended and comforted in all Dangers

gers and Adversities, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

LORD, we pray thee, that thy Grace may always prevent and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good Works, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

LORD, we beseech thee, grant thy People Grace to withstand the Temptations of the World, the Flesh and the Devil, and with pure Hearts and Minds to follow thee the only God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

O Lord, Forasmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee ; mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all Things direct and rule our Hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

O Almighty and most merciful God, of thy bountiful Goodness keep us we beseech thee from all Things
P 3 that

that may hurt us: that we being ready both in Body and Soul, may chearfully accomplish those things that thou wouldest have done, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

GRANT, we beseech thee, merciful Lord, to thy faithful People Pardon and Peace, that they may be cleansed from all their sins, and serve thee with a quiet mind, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

Almighty and Everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear, than we to pray, and to give more than either we desire or deserve; pour down upon us the abundance of thy Mercy, forgiving us those Things whereof our Conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, *Amen.*

We

WE do not presume to come unto thee most Merciful Lord, trusting in our own Righteousness, but in thy manifold and great Mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the Crumbs under the Table of thy meanest Servants. But thou art the same Lord, whose Property is always to have Mercy on those that fear thee; and whose Promise is, to forgive our Iniquities, and to remember our Sins no more; to heal our Back slidings, and love us freely, *through him* who his own self bare our sins in his own Body on the Tree: suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, to bring sinners unto thee: who hath laid on him the iniquity of us all; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our Justification; and is entred into Heaven itself, now to appear in the Presence of God for us, even Jesus who

Jer. 31. 34. Hos. 14. 4. 1 Pet. 2. 24. &
 3. 18. Isa. 53. 6. Rom. 4. 25. Heb. 9. 24.
 1 Theff. 1. 10.

delivereth us from the wrath to come. O let us enjoy the Comfort, by unfeignedly believing the Certainty of so great Salvation, and living in the joyful Sense and Praise of it, until we come eternally to sing Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power unto him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever, that loved us, and hath washed us from our Sins in his own Blood; and made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father, and our Father, to his God, and our God; to him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever, *Amen.*

O Thou who hast extended thy Mercy to so many and so great Sinners as we find upon record; we believe that thou art infinite in Mercy, hast not less in store for us, than thou hadst for them; but so loved the World that thou gavest thy only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him

Rev. 5. 13. & 1. 5, 6. John 20. 17.

should

should not perish, but have everlasting Life. O look down upon us in much Mercy, with the Pity and tender Compassions of a Father; deal with us with the loving Kindness of a Saviour; with the Favour of one that was sent, and came into the World, not to condemn the World; but that the World through him might be saved. O pardon all our past sins, Defections, Frailties; supply the Wants, Weaknesses, Imperfections of our sincere Obedience, with a gracious Acceptance; support, relieve us under all the Trials, Sorrows, Temptations of this World; and enable us to look up to thee in Peace, and with a comfortable well-grounded Confidence of being at last received into thine everlasting Kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

O Thou that dwellest in the high and holy Place: with him also that is of a contrite and humble Spirit, to revive the Spirit of the hum-

John 3. 16, 17.

ble, and to revive the Heart of the contrite ones ; pardon and speak Peace unto us through him who is our Peace, hath loved us, and given himself for us : justifie us freely by thy Grace through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom thou hast set forth to be a Propitiation for our Sins. O let us not distrust the Sufficiency, and Acceptance of that Sacrifice for all our Offences, which was made for the Sins of the whole World ; scatter and disperse the Clouds and Darkness of our Minds : clear up in us just Apprehensions of thee, and of our selves. Free us from all intangling Scruples, dejecting Cares, disquieting Doubts and Fears. Ease, quiet, compose our Minds by thy holy Spirit, the Comforter, by a firm Belief and Hope of thy free Grace and Mercy to all true Penitents, and by a stedfast Reliance upon thy Truth, thy faithful Promises, in and through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

Eph. 2. 14. & 5. 2. Rom. 3. 24, 25.

Have

HAVE mercy upon us, O God, according to thy loving Kindness; according to the multitude of thy tender Mercies, blot out all our Transgressions: wash us thoroughly from our Iniquities, and cleanse us from our Sins. Create in us clean Hearts, and renew a right Spirit within us. Cast us not away from thy Presence, and take not thy holy Spirit from us. Restore unto us the Joy of thy Salvation, and uphold us with thy free Spirit. Make us to hear Joy and Gladness, that the Bones which thou hast broken may rejoyce. Make thy Face to shine upon thy Servants, O save us for thy Mercy sake. Give us Comfort, and sure Confidence in thee: defend us from the Danger, and Fear of the Enemy, and keep us in perpetual Peace and Safety, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

BE thou, O Lord, our strong hold, whereunto we may always resort, save thy Servants, who put their Trust in thee. Send us help from thy holy place, and evermore mightily defend us, from the evil one, and every evil Thing. Tread down Satan under our Feet ; let the Enemy have no Advantage of us, nor approach to hurt us. Strengthen us against evil Suggestions, Temptations, and all our Spiritual Enemies. And grant, that by thy Help and Goodness, we may be defended, assisted, and comforted in all our Dangers and Adversities, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen,*

GIVE ear, O Shepherd of *Israel*, who out of thy tender Care and Compassion has promised to feed thy Flock like a Shepherd ; to gather the Lambs with thy arm, to carry them in thy bosom, and gently

Isa. 40. 11.

lead

lead those that are with young. In much Mercy consider our Weakness, Frailties, and Infirmities, who are thy People, and Sheep of thy Pasture. O forgive all our past Errings and Wandrings from thee, for his sake, who laid down his Life for his Sheep, the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World, to take away the Sins of the World: and for the future, lead us in the Paths of Righteousness for thy Name sake, to endless Refreshment, Ease and Rest. By patient Continuance in well-doing and suffering thy will (which is always best) let us seek for and obtain Glory and Honour, and Immortality; eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

O Thou that art the God of our Strength, send out thy Light and thy Truth into our Souls, let them lead and bring us unto thy holy Hill, thy Dwelling-place. Let no Distrust of thy merciful Acceptance deprive us of the Comforts of thy ways of Pleasantness, thy Paths of Peace. Let us
find

find and make it appear, that there is more in Religion than a bare Name for our Support : that our Rock is not their Rock, our Enemies themselves being Judge. When we are ready to say, our Foot slippeth, let thy Mercy O Lord hold us up : and in the multitude of our Thoughts within us, thy Comforts refresh, delight our Souls. Keep us from murmuring or repining against thee ; from entertaining any hard, unbecoming Thoughts of thee ; let us ever say, good is the Word of the Lord, be it unto us even as he will. Give us the Guidance, the Supports, the Comforts of thy holy Spirit. At what Time we are afraid, let us trust in thee, cast our Burden, all our Care upon thee, because thou carest for us, and hast promised then to sustain us ; enjoined us to be careful for nothing, but in every thing, by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving (for all thy Mercies) to make our Request known unto thee ; and let thy Peace which passeth all Understanding, keep our Hearts and

and Minds, in a Sense of thy Love and Favour, and Acceptance, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

O Fountain, Father of Mercies; God of all Comfort and Consolation; quench not the smoking Flax, break not the bruised Reed; revive, maintain, encrease and strengthen the smallest Degrees and Beginnings of Grace in us, until we have overcome our Doubts and Fears, and all our Spiritual Enemies. When we are apt to be cast down, dejected, and mistrustful of our selves, let us not cast away our Confidence in thee; not mistrust the God of Truth; not call in question thy free Promises of Grace and Mercy; not cast off the Hope of thy gracious Acceptance; not shut the Door of Mercy upon our selves, which thou hast opened to all the World. Be our Support and Stay under all Heaviness and Dejection of Spirit; stand by us in the Hour of Trouble, Trial, Temptation, Death: Let not thy Mercy, nor our Faith fail us; when

when our Flesh and our Hearts faileth us, be thou the strength of our Hearts, and our Portion for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

Remember us, O Lord with the Favour that thou bearest unto thy People: O visit us with thy Salvation; that we may see the good of thy chosen; that we may rejoyce in the Gladness of thy Servants; that we may glory with thine Inheritance. Let perfect Love cast out Fear: And a comfortable Hope of thy Mercy, be as an Anchor of our Souls, both sure and stedfast; that we may be never driven from it or thee, by any outward or inward Storms or Tempests. Let no Temptation befall us, but such as is common to Men, incident to thy Children: suffer us not to be tempted above what we are able, but with the Temptation give an happy Issue, make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear and overcome through him who was in all points tempted like as we

Psal. 106. 4, 5. Heb. 4. 15.

are

are, yet without sin, and hath overcome all his and our Enemies; who was dead and is alive for evermore, making Intercession for us; and hath the Keys of Hell and Death: To whom with thy blessed Majesty and holy Spirit, be all Honour, Glory, and Praise, now and ever, *Amen.*

UNTO God's gracious Mercy and Protection, we commit our selves. The good Lord bless us, and keep us. The Lord make his Face to shine upon us, and be gracious unto us. The Lord lift up the Light of his Countenance upon us, and give us Peace, now and evermore, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

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